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EDITORIAL NOTES

"AGGREGATE circulation of the eight national dailies," writes that pithy and informative journal, *World's Press News*, "is at present approximately 10,260,400." (This figure excludes the two financial papers, but includes the picture papers.) Astronomical figures have lost their power of surprising us. Remembering telephones, radio, films, and other ubiquitous novelties we may keep our surprise for the fact that so modern a thing as the contemporary newspaper has so comparatively distant an ancestry. The *Morning Post*, whose decease has been recently lamented, was founded in 1772. The *Times*, under the name of the *Daily Universal Register*, was first published in 1785. It was between those two dates that the shrewd if not very inspiring poet, George Crabbe, invoking the contemporary newspaper, wrote:

To you all readers turn, and they can look
Pleased on a paper, who abhor a book;
Those, who ne'er deign'd their Bible to peruse,
Would think it hard to be denied their news.

It might not occur to us, studying Lord Beaverbrook's recent pronouncements, to think of the *Daily Express* as entering into close competition with the Bible. The circulation of the *Daily Express* is nearly two and a half millions. "I estimate," says Lord Beaverbrook, "that there are 6,000,000 homes in Britain which take a national newspaper. If we are to achieve perfection, therefore, we have 3,500,000 homes to enter before our task is done." Lord Beaverbrook, believing in himself, thinks that the road to perfection lies in the introduction of six million copies of his organ into six million British homes—that is, in imposing his rendering of the news of the world and his opinion of it on the minds of the whole nation. Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler, have similar self-confidence.

LORD BEAVERBROOK AND LORD CAMROSE

But we have not yet reached that millennium. There are still

seven and a half million copies of other national journals disputing the way, to say nothing of the provincial journals which, each in its own locality, cling doggedly on against great odds, contributing far more to the formation of public opinion than the small figures of their circulation would indicate. In London, apart from the two-penny *Times*, and apart from the picture papers, Lord Beaverbrook has still to reckon with the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Herald*, the *News Chronicle*, and, last but by no means least, the *Daily Telegraph*. Lord Camrose's paper certainly gives us food for thought. Here is a journal, not long ago priced at twopence, which has boldly entered the penny field and stuck to its guns in preserving its twopenny character; it aims at presenting a balanced account of the news fully and representatively, soberly, but not dully, making, it is true, due concessions to most of the human frailties, but without the fireworks, the fussy, confusing glitter of headlines, the catch-penny make-up which the other penny papers, copying one another, and relying upon a conviction and a routine of their own making, serve up as "what the public wants." Lord Camrose has had the courage of his convictions, and he has succeeded. His journal is now well on the way towards the three-quarters of a million mark, and probably will not stop there. His paper has proved the case for the older style of journalism when adapted to modern life. In saying this it must not be supposed that I am offering any bouquet to its political opinions or its social judgments. I am speaking of it only as a piece of journalism conducted in accordance with a sober journalistic tradition.

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This brings me to the question of its recent absorption of the *Morning Post*—a journal which had also come down to a penny, and was making a similar effort to retain the "twopenny" character but did not succeed in the same way in pushing up its circulation. In the course of the libel action brought by Lord Camrose last month a good deal was said about the amalgamation of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Morning Post*—more properly described as the absorption of the latter. Now the swallowing of one national newspaper by another is a serious matter which Fleet Street regards as a major disaster in its journalistic life. A London newspaper employs an immense number of journalists, printers, advertisement men, travellers, and men and women engaged on its publishing and clerical staff, and a sudden closing down throws all these persons out of employment. The number of national newspapers is reduced from seven to six (excluding the financial and picture papers), and the field of employment for journalists engaged on them is therefore

reduced by approximately one seventh. But even that, tragic as it may be for some individuals, is not the most serious element in the disaster from the national point of view. We are confronted with a further reduction in those few types of opinion which are represented in national daily journalism; one more minority is sacrificed; though I seldom agreed with the politics of the *Morning Post*, I recognize that it was a journal which honestly represented a distinctive minority view, and as such ought not to be deprived of a hearing in a democratic community.

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To say this is not to make any complaint against Lord Camrose. If he had not bought the paper, it would have died. Rather, what demands consideration is the tendency of the daily Press to become concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, with less opportunity for minorities, often intellectual minorities, to find a hearing—the tendency towards intellectual totalitarianism, with the finer and subtler elements always in danger of being squeezed out.

That, indeed, is a serious situation in a democracy. During the course of a single generation we have witnessed the elimination of the *Standard*, the *Westminster Gazette*, the *Morning Leader*, the *Daily Chronicle*, and now the *Morning Post*; and in the provinces the position of half a dozen independent papers with splendid traditions is gravely threatened. It is easy to account for the change—the ever-mounting expenses which make it impossible to maintain the services of a daily paper except on the basis of a gigantic circulation, and a corresponding advertisement revenue. The present tendency, increasing, will mean more and more the concentration of the power of the daily Press in a few hands, more and more the elimination of minority ways of thinking. The “freedom” of the daily Press will become the freedom of six men; and when or if the *Daily Express* achieves “perfection,” it will be the freedom of one man.

THE NATIONAL BOOK COUNCIL

In writing last month about the desirability of an intensified campaign to induce the reading public to buy more books, I ought to have commented on the work that is already being done by the National Book Council, whose sole aim it is—to use their own words—“to work for the promotion of the book-reading habit and the wider distribution of books.” Their invention of “book tokens” for presents was an inspiration which has undoubtedly had an immense effect in increasing the sale of books. Their book weeks and book competitions, their inquiries bureau, book lists, catalogues, posters, and show cards have been of direct service to their members, and have

had a cumulative effect which must have been considerable. Two of their activities should specially be mentioned—first, their work in connection with exhibitions, not only at Dorland Hall in London, but also at Bristol, Bournemouth, Bradford, Glasgow, and Birmingham; and secondly, their preparation of three films—"Cover to Cover," "Chapter and Verse," and "The Story of a Book"—which are now being shown to audiences all over the country. I have no doubt that the best way to promote the campaign of which I was writing last month would be to give increased support to the National Book Council.

THE KING'S MEDAL FOR POETRY

I have been asked, What has been happening to the King's Medal for Poetry? Awarded for the first time in 1935 (for the year 1934) to Mr. Laurence Whistler, a long time has elapsed without any further award. The delay has made a good many persons suppose that none of the younger poets have produced anything which in the opinion of the committee deserved commendation. We have been asked whether it is the case that none of the poets who have been so much before us in the last year or two—W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Day Lewis, Frederic Prokosch, Ruth Pitter, Louis MacNeice, William Empson (to name only some of those who are qualified under the rules)—have been held to have justified their title to rank side-by-side with Mr. Laurence Whistler. Among the work produced in this period there has been a good deal that has been more than "novel," or "original," which has struck a distinctive note and compelled us to think again about some of our fundamental conceptions of poetry, not of course, with the effect of altering those fundamental conceptions, but modifying our views as to how its aims may be attained. Granted that there has been much which is artificial and unpoetic, much that is derivative from T. S. Eliot and traceable in some cases to his mannerisms more than his merits, much that is mere mimicry and in accordance with the fashions of a clique, none the less I should have been surprised if the committee responsible for the award had not been able to sift the wheat from the chaff and find it in its heart to give the Medal.

* * *

I now learn, however, that a decision regarding the award for 1936 was arrived at by the committee some months ago, though the announcement has been delayed. The conditions are: "the medal will be given either for a poet's first or second volume of verse, or to a poet still under 35 years of age." The committee consists of the

Poet Laureate, Mr. Walter de la Mare, Professor Gilbert Murray, and Dr. I. A. Richards, who between them certainly represent more than one critical stand-point. The violent clash between the younger poets of to-day and the poets who were young twenty years ago must have added to the difficulties of a choice difficult in any case. If it were desired to enlarge the committee by adding another member rarely qualified by his sympathy with both sides, an ideal choice, in my opinion, would be Mr. Edwin Muir.

POETRY IN PUBLIC-HOUSES

Or should we put these matters to a popular vote? Another committee—the Committee for Verse and Prose Recitation—has decided to appeal, not merely to the public, but to the public-house, the latter being “a ready-made and permanent centre of recreation and communal life,” and has been arranging readings and recitations of “good verse” in these places of popular entertainment. The idea of the “reformed public-house” came in some time ago, and always seemed to me an inspired device for increasing the habit of moderate drinking by making drinking respectable. The Licensed Victuallers tumbled to the idea with alacrity—successfully, if I may judge by the processions of motor-cars which make their way to the reformed public-house in the next street to that in which I write. Well, here is more reformation. I like to think of Mr. W. B. Yeats contributing to the reform of the “Red Lion” by chanting his poems to the casual audience that gathers there, or Mr. Spender impressing his views on imaginative drinkers at the “Bull and Bush.” It ought to be said that some of these places of refreshment have already made a speciality of cabaret shows and variety turns, which can be further diversified by poetry recitals. A week or two ago one of the youngest of the younger poets went down, according to programme, to a certain public-house, armed with a sheaf of his own poems. Though sandwiched in between a dance turn and a comedian, he did not shrink from the task of reading the most serious of his poems to a respectful if somewhat astonished audience; and only once, during a fanciful allusion to ducks, was there any interruption—and that was a solitary “quack! quack!”

R. A. SCOTT-JAMES

LETTERS

By Edwin Muir

I

FORGIVENESS now, about to be,
 Shrivels and dies, and Memory
 Stands in its place. Drawn and old
 The offence sits where it sat that night,
 Dead venom bubbles, smooth and cold,
 That once ran hot into the mould.
 I see your tongue stretched back and tight,
 Recoiling in the gathered spring,
 I see the sideward sweeping sting
 Striking secure at all that's mine,
 While round us sit the idle ring
 Beneath the smooth unmoving light.
 Your tongue rolled backward to the root
 And then. . . . We both were destitute,
 I know, that moment. A malign
 Power acted for us, chose alike
 Me to be struck and you to strike.
 It was not you. Yet how efface
 The spider's web spun on your face
 That instant, prise it from its place?

Yes, what can we do? Tell, help me how
 To untie the knot of Then and Now,
 Re-enact the act, then slough it clean,
 Leaving the pure essential scene,
 Never touched light and hurtless air.

It was not we. But we were there.
 Our eyes saw. Can they see again
 A different spectacle? Extricate
 The fatal actors from the Fate
 That moved the act? Come, let us feign
 A desperate reconciliation,
 Rise woundless from our separate palls,
 Retrieve our parts but keep our souls
 Our own.

The ever-waiting walls
 Close in. We are there. I see the spring

Just moving.

Now, if we can fling
Our whole weight on it, we are free,
And full forgiveness yet may be!

II

Tried friendship must go down perforce
Before the outward eating rage
And murderous heart of middle age,
Killing kind memory at its source,
If it were not for mortality,
The thought of It that levels all
And coldly pillows side by side
The tried friend and the too much tried.

Then think of that which will have made
Us and all else contemporary.
Look long enough and you will see
The dead fighting with the dead.
Now's the last hour for chivalry,
Now we can still escape the shame
Of striking the unanswering head,
Before we are changed put off the blame.

But should this seem a niggardly
And ominous reconciliation,
Look yet again until you see,
Fixed in the body's final station,
The features of immortality.
Try to pursue this quarrel then.
You cannot. This is less than man
And more. That more is our salvation.
Now let us seize it. Now we can, we can!

I DO NOT ENVY

By Jan Struther

I DO not envy lovers who are never apart:
For not in the pin-point starry conflagration
Of touch or kiss
Deepest contentment is;
But in the memory of delight, and its anticipation—
The interstellar spaces of the heart.

THE STOCKDOVE

By Ruth Pitter

CLOSE in the hollow bank she lies,
Soiling with clay her azure dress :
Then slowly lifts that head, whose eyes
Have given a name to gentleness.
O! is she caught, and is she snared,
Or why so still, and perched so low?
She is not ruffled, is not scared,
And yet I watch and cannot go.

And dumbly comes the hard reply ;
Death shakes her like a winter storm ;
Then her round head she would put by
As she was wont, in feathers warm :
Half lifts the wing, half turns the bill,
Then leans more lowly on the clay,
Sighs, and at last is quiet and still ;
Sits there, and yet is fled away.

The epoch will not suffer me
To weep above such humble dead,
Or I could mourn a century
For all such woe unmerited ;
For the soft eye, the feathers blue,
The voice more gentle than the rain,
The bill that dabbled in the dew,
We strew the field with poisoned grain.

My questioned spirit's sidelong look
From her old fortress answers me,
From where she reads her secret book
On the tall rock Infinity :
From where the innocent dead to that
High place is fled away from grief,
And whence as from an Ararat
She brings the silver olive-leaf.

POEMS

By Stevie Smith



LA GRETCHEN DE NOS JOURS

WOULD he might come
Again and I
Upon his breast
Again might lie.

Would I had not
In foolish wrath
Driven him ever
From my path.

Would that the sun
His day's course over
Might that same day's
Lost dawn recover.

As vain as this
Vain prayer are all
Vain prayers that would
Past days recall.

Never will sun
Now sunk away
Rise up again
On yesterday.

Never will love
Untimely slain
Rise from the grave
And live again.

MOTHER, AMONG THE DUSTBINS

MOTHER, among the dustbins and the manure
I feel the measure of my humanity, an allure
As of the presence of God, I am sure

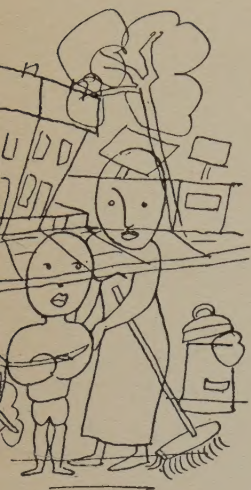
In the dustbins, in the manure, in the cat at play,
Is the presence of God, in a sure way
He moves there. What do you say?

I too have felt the presence of God in the broom
I hold, in the cobwebs in the room,
But most of all in the shadow of the tomb.

Ah! but that thought that informs the hope of our kind
Is but an empty thing, what lies behind?
Naught but the vanity of a protesting mind

That would not die. This is the thought that bounces
Within a conceited head and trounces
Enquiry. Man is most frivolous when he pronounces.

Well mother, I shall continue to feel as I do,
And I think you would be wise to do so too,
Can you question the folly of man in the creation of God? Who
are you?



THE WORD

OH where is the word
Said sweet Sally Soo
Oh! where is the word I seek
It cannot be true
There is no word from you
To put in my velvet cheek
But the echoes ran
And the silence came
And alone in the cold
She is much the same
Oh! where is the word oh! where is it pray
Don't keep me waiting all night and day.

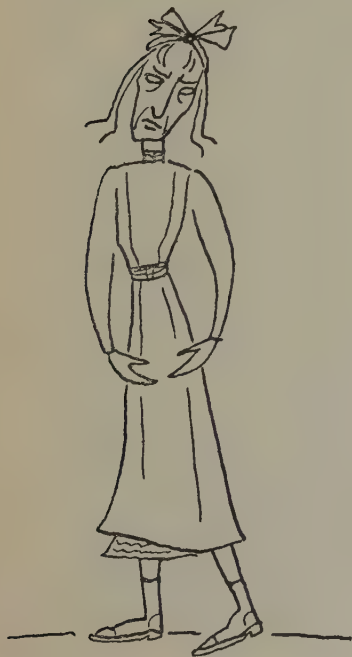


GNÄDIGES FRAULEIN

IN the cold light of morning, she was looking rather queer,
In the cold light of morning, with a ribbon round her hair
And her youth lay behind her a long time for many a year.

For when she was young, they took her love away
And sent him to work, beyond the Mexique Bay
And she thought of him and lost her wits and now her hair is grey.

With an, Oh if I think of him he'll come again to me,
And an, Oh it was but a whim that took him o'er the sea;
And an, Oh for all my eyes are dim they can look lovingly.



[A longer series of poems by Stevie Smith, with illustrations by herself, will appear in the December (Christmas) number.]

LAURA KIELER

THE MODEL FOR IBSEN'S NORA

By B. M. Kinck

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORWEGIAN BY CHARLES ARCHER.

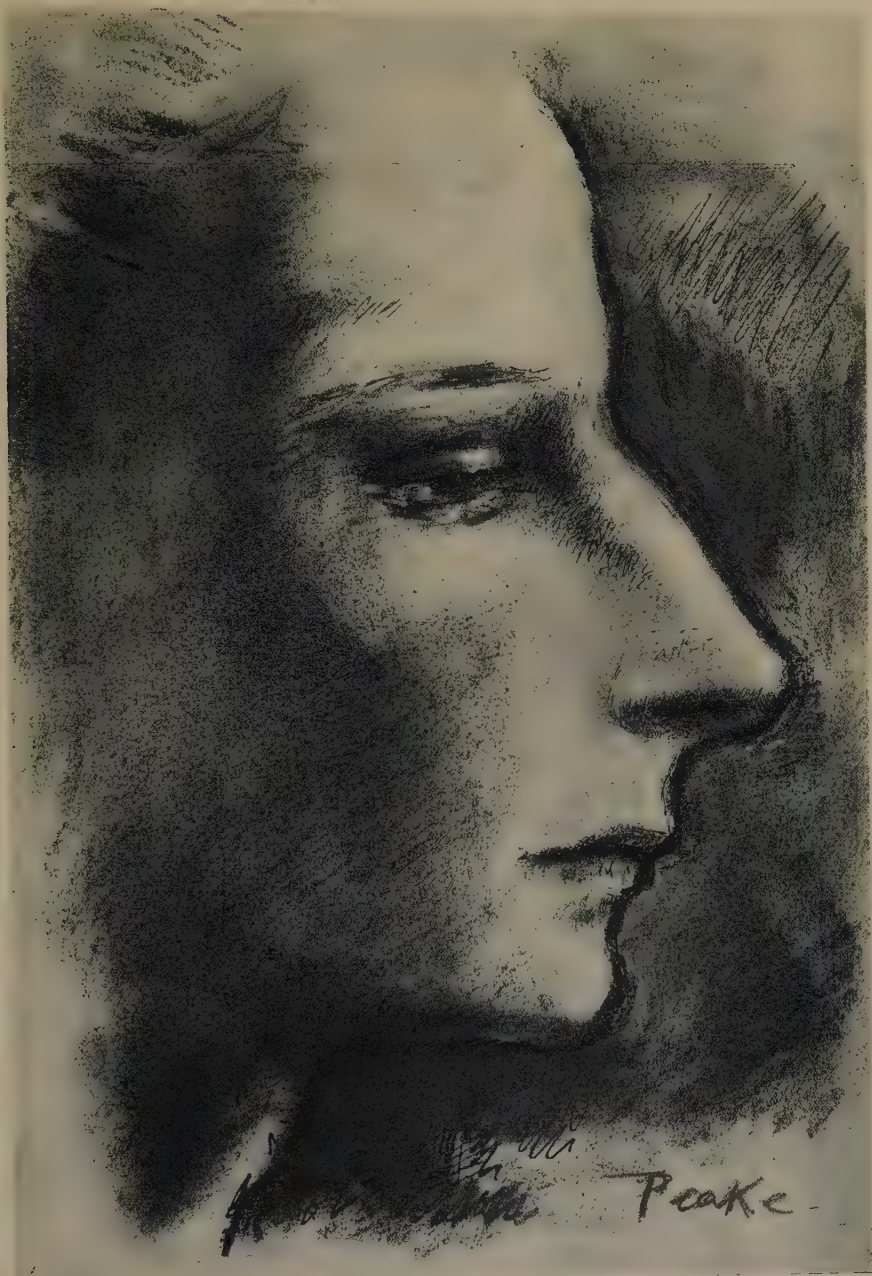
THAT Ibsen was somewhat incautious in the use of living models for his dramatic creations* is shown by the history of Laura Kieler—the woman who “sat” for the character of Nora in *A Doll's House*; a story which well illustrates the difficulties that may beset the poet in such cases, and the yet more unfortunate predicament in which the very vividness of his character-creation may place the “model.”

Laura Kieler's husband, a schoolmaster by profession, was an excellent teacher, and popular in society, but of a somewhat explosive temperament, particularly where money matters were concerned. When quite a boy, he had seen his home ruined as a consequence of his father's having stood security for a well-meaning but irresponsible friend. The recollection of this catastrophe weighed heavily upon his mind and made him a prey to money anxieties, particularly as his relatively small pay as assistant-master barely sufficed to maintain his home and his growing family in the social position to which he was used. His impulsiveness, which in ordinary life showed itself in cordial warmth of behaviour, in matters of household economy often took the form of violent outbursts of anger, of which his wife bore the brunt.

She was, her son says, “in her youth certainly very naïve in matters relating to money and methods of account,” and her warmth of heart would often lead her to help others, when, in cold fact, she could not afford it. At the same time personal extravagance and flightiness were quite foreign to her nature, and she kept a wakeful eye on incomings and expenses. She was on the whole of an optimistic disposition, more artistic than practical; her imagination and warmth of heart were evidently stronger than her critical and logical sense. She could at times be somewhat eccentric and unbalanced, but she was never in the least “egocentric.” Her children always remembered her as the good angel of the household.

Very soon there arose a certain strain in the relations of the couple, and Fru Kieler became more and more possessed by a panic fear of her husband's bursts of anger. None the less she was devoted to him, and would even sometimes have recourse to

* See *The London Mercury* for October, p. 532.



JOHN GIELGUD, 1937
by MERVYN PEAKE

white lies to conceal his weaknesses from the world. She tried to help out the family income by literary work; and when his lungs became affected and the doctor advised a journey to the South for his health, she borrowed money for the purpose without his knowledge. He had an abhorrence of debt, and had besides, Fru Kieler says, a certain aesthetic fastidiousness which made him reluctant to come in contact with the prosaic side of things. (Compare Helmer in *A Doll's House*.) The journey was successfully carried out—Kieler and his wife went together to Italy, and he came back cured. (He lived, in fact, for forty years longer.) But her difficulties constantly increased. She had disappointments in the literary field, and was soon forced to raise a new loan. When the note for this fell due, neither Fru Kieler nor her principal surety was able to meet it, and the surety, under threat of being sold up, implored Fru Kieler to save him from what would have meant for him utter ruin.

Her position grew more and more desperate; overwork and constant strain had unsettled her judgment, and in the end seriously affected her mind. She herself writes: "I worked harder and harder, my health grew worse and worse, and I was expecting another child. My overtaxed brain gave out; I saw visions; fancy appeared to me reality." And, speaking of the surety for the fatal loan, "Then—in my feverish anxiety to save him, I made a crazy attempt to raise money by a bill of exchange written with my own hand. I remember praying, as I wrote it, that God would help me in this attempt to rescue him, so that he should not come to ruin for my sake." . . . But the bill was returned protested and she herself tore it up.

She mentions also the receipt of a letter which destroyed all the hopes she had had of further literary earnings, and was the direct cause of the mad attempt to pass the bill of exchange. It was from Henrik Ibsen himself, who thus unwittingly had a hand in bringing about the catastrophe which he was later to utilize, in a much altered shape, as the theme of his play.

Ibsen had long felt an interest in Laura Kieler, or Laura Petersen, as she was when he first knew her. At the age of twenty she had had the boldness to publish a story, *Brand's Daughters*, intended as a "clearer elucidation" of the religious questions raised in Ibsen's *Brand*; a publication which had led to a correspondence with Ibsen, and later to a personal acquaintance. In particular, she saw much of the Ibsens at Dresden in 1871. She was then still a bright and joyous young girl, and Ibsen nicknamed her "the Skylark." But at the same time he encouraged her, and advised her to develop her undoubted talent as an authoress.

When the Kielers were on their way back from their Italian journey

they met Ibsen in Munich. But by that time his gay "skylark's" wings were already drooping; and Laura Kieler confided the story of her first borrowing to Fru Ibsen, who probably passed it on to her own husband. . . . Some time after, Ibsen received a manuscript from Laura, with a request that he would help her to get it accepted by the Gyldendal publishing house, which gave better terms than her previous publishers. It was Ibsen's reply to this request that crushed her last hope of escape from her desperate position. For he wrote that the work was "a hasty and in every respect unsuccessful production." At the same time he begs her to place all her troubles in her husband's hands—for he thinks he can see that she is weighed down by secret anxieties. He thus took upon himself a rôle similar to that assumed by Fru Linde towards Nora in the play—hoping, Fru Kieler thought, to force her to a confession.

The manuscript in question was no doubt written at the time when her brain was on the verge of distraction. When it was returned by Ibsen she burned it, and, instead of confessing to her husband, had recourse to the above-mentioned unhappy attempt to pass a fabricated note of hand. Along with another crazy proceeding—which, however, was in no sense fraudulent—this led to a catastrophic "day of reckoning" with her husband when the matter came to light. For though his mood wavered, and his first impulse seems to have been one of compassion, the public opinion of his circle influenced him strongly against her. (Cp. Helmer's fear of the world's judgment.) As a result the child at her breast was taken from her, and she herself was compulsorily placed for a month in a mental home. A separation was forced through. But the county magistrate and the Dean who took part in the proceedings afterwards declared that her treatment had been scandalously harsh.

After two years' separation she agreed, at Kieler's request, to resume their married life—chiefly, she says, to get back her children.

Everyone can see the striking resemblances and the no less striking divergences between Ibsen's play and this drama of real life. Ibsen has, of course, purposely altered and reshaped the story. But, apart from this, the details of the catastrophe had reached him only in the distorted form given them by common rumour. The theme of the play and the nature of its conflict inevitably recalled the real-life story; as also the detail that "the skylark," Ibsen's nickname of Dresden days for his young friend, reappears as Helmer's pet name for Nora in the play. But the catastrophe in the play was wholly different, and when popular report represented Laura Kieler as identical with—or even inferior to—the macaroon-nibbling, tarantella-dancing, childish Nora, with her limited moral horizon and her

illogical contempt for "society," she felt at times as if Ibsen had "killed her soul." We can see, too, how the play must have intensified her sorrows and her difficulties, by exposing her to intrusive and torturing curiosity on the part of people who had no sufficient knowledge either of her mental sufferings or of the motives for her actions. Her husband too, it seemed to her, was unfairly exposed, since certain of Kieler's actual traits were only too easily recognizable in Helmer's otherwise wholly fictitious character. Someone even said to her: "Nora's father—was your father." And as Helmer in the play had sharply characterized Nora's father as unprincipled in his official conduct, the remark could not but wound her severely, —particularly as it rested on vague rumour, which, moreover, was demonstrably untrue.

In the Press, too, there appeared from time to time inaccurate and wounding references to the matter; and ten years later, on the appearance of Laura Kieler's play, *Men of Honour*, the "Nora-story" was raked up again by several newspapers in a misleading and injurious form. It is not surprising, then, that she should have felt and said that in producing *A Doll's House* Ibsen had grown rich on her tears—for it was not *Brand* or *Peer Gynt* nor yet *The Pillars of Society* that made the dramatist world-famous, but *A Doll's House*, in part on account of its effectiveness as a weapon in the movement for the emancipation of women.

Inevitably a coolness arose in the personal relations between Ibsen and the lady, and the strain reached breaking-point in 1891, in a four-hour interview between the two at Ibsen's new home in Viktoria Terrasse, Christiania. When he heard from her the whole story and realized her sufferings he was moved to tears. But when she told him without reserve what she thought of it all, and begged him to write a few words that would put an end for good to all the malicious insinuations against her, he was thrown, she says, into great agitation, and, after a painful struggle with himself, refused her request. "Oh, Laura, Laura! I don't see how I can let you go—but I *cannot* do what you ask me. It is impossible!" This was his last word to her; and they never met again. And when, during the celebrations of Ibsen's 70-year jubilee, the women of Denmark invited Laura Kieler to join with them in their homage to him, she replied with a decided refusal.

We may well believe that the final interview above described brought home to Ibsen the responsibility of the artist towards his "models"—and towards himself as a human being. His "dramatic epilogue," *When We Dead Awaken*, deals with this responsibility, and is a merciless unveiling of his own tragedy as artist and as man.

THE SCAPEGOAT

By V. S. Pritchett

THERE were long times when we were at peace and when the world left us alone. We could go down Earl Street and, although we did not like the place and it felt strange to us, and the women stared down from the windows, and a child here and there might call out a name after us, we just walked on thinking of something else. But we were always more at ease and more ourselves, even in the quietest times of truce, when we had turned the corner by the hop warehouse and had got back into Terence Street which was our own. The truth is that you can't live without enemies and the best enemies are the ones nearest home; and though we sometimes went out to the Green to boo the speakers and some of our lads went after the Yids or joined a procession up West, that was idleness and distraction. The people we hated were not a mile away on the main road where the trams and the buses are and you don't know one man from the next; no, the people we hated were round the corner, next door, in Earl Street. They were, we used to say, a different class of people from ourselves altogether.

I don't know why, but if there was any trouble in the world, we turned out and attacked them. I don't know either how these things began. You would know there was trouble coming when you heard the voices of the children getting shriller and more excited, until their cries became rhythmic like the pulse of native war cries in the forest. We were, indeed, lost in a *jungle* of streets. Somehow the children would have sticks, old pieces of board and stones in their hands and they would be rushing in groups to the hop warehouse and jeering and then scattering back. A similar thing would be happening in Earl Street. Usually this happened in the warm long evenings of the summer. Then, after the children, the thing got hold of the women and they came down from their windows where they had been watching and scratching their arms, very hot and restless, and would stand at their doorsteps and start shouting at their children. A stone would fly up and then the women would be down in the middle of the street.

It might take a day to work up or it might take longer. You would get the Earl Street girls going down our street talking in loud voices daring us, and our young lads would stand by saying nothing until the girls got to the corner. And then those girls would have to bolt. Towards closing time the Gurneys, the fighting family in

Earl Street, would be out and we had our Blackers and then it was a question of who came out of the "Freemason's" and how he came out. But perhaps nothing would happen and we would just go down Earl Street after dark and merely kick their milk bottles down the basements.

This has been going on ever since the old people can remember. When the war came we knew everyone in Earl Street was a spy or a Hun or a Conchie. The Great War, for us, was between Earl Street and Terence Street. They had a V.C. and we hadn't, though we had a bunch of other stuff, and one man who escaped from the Turks and was in the papers; and, though we did our best, the tea we gave was nothing to the tea they did in Earl Street for their V.C. Where they got the money from was the puzzle. Thirty-two pounds. Some of our women said the Earl Street girls must have been on the streets, and at the "Freemason's" the men said half of Earl Street were nothing but bloody pensioners. The police came in before we had the question settled. But when the war ended things changed. Half of our lot was out of work, and when we went down Earl Street we could see half of their lot out of work too, and Earl Street did not seem quite so strange to us. One street seemed to blend into the other. This made some of our lot think and they gave their steps an extra clean to show there was a difference between Earl Street and Terence Street after all.

In the years that followed sometimes we were up on Earl Street, sometimes we were down. We were waiting for some big event. It did not come for a long time and a stranger might have thought that the old frontiers had gone and the reign of universal peace was upon us. It was not. The Jubilee came and we saw our chance. Earl Street had collected thirty-two pounds for its V.C.'s tea-party. We reckoned we would top that for the Jubilee. We would collect forty.

There was a red-haired Jew in our street called Lupinsky. He was a tailor. He was round-shouldered from bending over the table and his eyes were weak from working by gas at night. In the rush season he and his family would be up past midnight working. He was a keen man. He came out in pimples—he was so keen. Lupinsky saw everything before any of us. He saw the Jubilee before the King himself. He had got his house full of bunting and streamers and Union Jacks. "Get in at the early doors," he said. "What'll you have," he used to say to us when we went to his shop. "'Rule Britannia' or 'God Save the King.' " "Who's that?" we said. "The King of the Jews?" "Getcha," said Lupinsky, "He's dead. Didn't you hear?" He raked in the money. They had another Jew in Earl

Street doing the same. "I say!" called Lupinsky. "I say!"—we used to call him "I-say-what'll-you-have"—"Cohen's sold 120 yards to Terence Street and you've only done 70." So we doubled. "I say," says Lupinsky. "I say. When you going to start collecting? They got ten quid in Earl Street and you haven't started."

And this was true. The trouble was we couldn't agree upon who should collect. We had had a nasty experience with the Club a few years back. And then Lupinsky was hot for doing it himself. He'd got the bunting. He'd seen it coming. He'd even got boxes. He'd thought of everything. We had nothing against Lupinsky, but when we saw him raking in the money on his God Saves and Kiss-me-quicks and his flags of all the nations, we thought he was collecting enough as it was. He might mix up the two collections. "No," we said to Lupinsky. "You're doing your bit, we'll do the rest." "That's O.K.," Lupinsky said. He never bore resentment, he was too keen. "But I hear Earl Street's up to twelve-ten." He wasn't upset with us but he couldn't bear to see us shilly-shallying around, while Earl Street walked away with it. "If you don't trust me," he said, "can't you trust yourselves? I don't know what's happened to this street." And he spat from the top of his doorstep into the gutter.

Lupinsky was wrong about us. We trust each other. There is not a man in Terence Street you cannot trust. In that nasty business we had with the Club, the man was not a Terence Street man. We could trust one another. But we were frightened. Forty pounds! we thought. That's a big sum. We didn't like the handling of it. There wasn't one of us who had seen forty pounds in his life. The Blackers, a good fighting lot, were terrified. Albert Smith and his uncle were the most likely, but they said they were single and didn't like the idea. And we, for some reason, thought a single man wasn't right for the job. And the wives, the married ones, though eagerly wanting their husbands to do it, were so afraid the honour would go to someone else that they said to give it to a married man was tempting Providence. Lupinsky went down the street almost in tears saying Earl Street had touched £17 10s.

Then suddenly we saw the right man had been staring us in the face all the time. He was not single and he was not married. He was a widower, made serious by death: Art Edwards. We chose Art Edwards and he agreed.

Art Edwards was a man of forty-seven and the moment he agreed we were proud of him. He was a grey-haired man, not very talkative and of middle height, very patient and looked you straight in the face. He lived with his sister who looked after his two children, he had a fruit stall in the main road—he had been there for twenty

years—and every Sunday he used to go alone with a bunch of flowers for his wife's grave at the cemetery. The women admired him very much for doing this. He never changed. His house was the neatest house in our street and he never seemed to get richer or poorer. He just went on the same.

He had been a widower a good long time, too, and some thought he ought to marry again. The women were curious about him and said you couldn't but respect a man who didn't take a second and Art was held up as a model. This didn't prevent many of them running after him and spreading the rumour afterwards that his sister was a woman who wouldn't let a man call his soul his own. But the way Art mourned for the dead and kept faithful to The First, the ONE AND ONLY, as the women said, was striking. Some of the men said that being a model wasn't healthy and that if they had been in Art's shoes they would muck around on the quiet. They wondered why the hell he didn't, yet admired him for his restraint. Some of us couldn't have lived with temptation all those years without slipping up.

Art had put a black band on his sleeve when his wife died and had worn it ever since. But when he started collecting for the tea we had the feeling he had put off his mourning and had come alive again. We were pleased about this because, with his modest, retiring ways, we hardly knew him. "It will bring him out," we said. He came round with his little red book and his tin and we said, "What's it now, Art? How we doin'?" Art was slow at adding up but accurate. He told us. We made a big effort and we touched the ten pound mark pretty soon.

This woke us up and made us feel good, but Lupinsky came round and said it wasn't any bloody good at all. They'd touched £19 in Earl Street. So one of the women said they'd help Art. He didn't want this, or his sister didn't. So she joined in, too, to keep the other women off him. They knocked at his door at all hours and stopped him in the street. And when she saw this his sister put on her best hat and coat and went round and stopped their men. The result was everyone was collecting and came round to Art and said,

"Here y'are, Art. One-and-eight."

Or

"He' are, Art, eight-and-six."

And two of the Blacker girls had a fight because one said the other wasn't collecting fair but was cheapening herself to get the money. For we touched seventeen and went on to twenty-one.

The night we passed Earl Street some of our girls went out and

just walked down Earl Street telling them. They didn't like it. A crowd from Earl Street came round and called "Down with the Yids," outside Lupinsky's. Then Earl Street picked up and passed us again. We went round to Art and planked down more money. Art got out his book and he couldn't write it down fast enough.

"Where do you keep it, Art?" we said.

He showed us a box in the cupboard. It was a fine sight all that money. His sister said,

"Art's picked up a bit in the High Street." We looked at him as if he were a hero. "Slike business," he said. "You've got to go out for it."

We looked with wonder at him. We had chosen the right man. It was bringing him out. And he had ideas too. He got some of the kids to go out at night with tins.

Well, we passed Earl Street and they passed us. Then we passed them again. It was ding-dong all the time. Lupinsky flew in and out with the latest like a wasp and stung us to more. Art Edwards, he said, had no life in him. After this, it became madness. People got out their savings.

There was a funny case at Harry Laws'. He was a boozier, a big, heavy man, very particular in the house and very religious. Some nights when he was bad he used to beat his wife and we used to look down into their basement window wondering what would be happening inside, for something usually was happening. There were often shouts and curses and screams coming from that room and then times, which made you uncomfortable, when everything was quiet. Harry Law was often out of a job. Mrs. Law was a timid woman and everyone was sorry for her. She used to go up to the "Freemason's" and look through the door at him. She was a thin, round-shouldered woman, always anxious about her husband and sorry that he made a fool of himself, for he got pompous when he was drunk and she hated the way people laughed at him. He used to say she had no ambition and he had dragged her out of the gutter. She said, "*Down* into the gutter, you mean." They used to have guilty arguments like this for hours, each boasting they were better than the other and wondering all the time why they had got into their present situation. Then Harry Law would go to church so as to feel good and find out why; and his wife used to stop at home and think about it, too. She would put her arms round him and love him when he came back. And he would be all right for a few days until he got some scheme into his head for making money. When he had the scheme he would go out and get drunk again.

Harry Law wanted to show everyone that he was a man of ideas

and ambitions, and better than the rest of us in Terence Street. He used to dress up on Sundays. He used to say he had been better off once and had had a shop. The truth was, as his wife bitterly told everyone, he'd always been the same; up and down all his life. She couldn't bear other people laughing at him, but she used to tear his reputation to bits herself and get great pleasure out of doing it.

It was just at the height of our madness that he came into the "Freemason's" and instead of cadging for drinks, he began to order freely. A funny thing had happened, he said. And he said, in his lordly voice, "I want Art Edwards." It turned out Harry had been going across the room while his wife was out and had tripped up on something on the floor. There was a bump in the lino. Being a very inquisitive man who never had anything to do, he knelt down and felt the lump. "I thought it was dirt," he said. One of the things he always said about his wife was that she was dirty. He was a very clean man himself. He decided to take up the lino and underneath he found a lump of money wrapped up in notes. It was his wife's savings.

That was why Harry Law was lording it at the "Freemason's." He had hardly given a penny to the Collection, but now, when everyone was present, he was going to make a great gesture and show his greatness. When Art came in, he said, "Here Art. Have a fiver."

We all stared. Harry Law was leaning against the bar with the notes in the tips of his fingers as if they were dirt, like a duke giving a tip.

At that moment his wife came in.

"That's mine," she screamed. "It's mine."

There was a row and Art wouldn't take the money. Everyone said that a man hadn't the right to take his wife's money. But Harry said, "What!" Wasn't his money as good as anybody's and we said, "Yes, Harry, but that belongs to your missus." She was crying and he kept saying, "Go home. I'll teach you to come round here. It is my money. I earned it."

This was awkward. Between her tears, with her hands covering her face, Mrs. Law was saying she had saved it. He was always ruining them, so she had to save.

Still, if he'd earned it, it was his.

"Take that money," says Harry, dropping it like a lord on the floor. The notes fell down, we all looked at them and no one moved. Mr. Bell of the "Freemason's" got a laugh by saying we were littering up his bar with paper. Then Harry turned his back and we picked it up and were going to give it to Mrs. Law, but Harry says in a

threatening voice, "That's Art's. For the Collection. I reckon I got Earl Street knocked silly."

That part of the statement was irresistible. While we hesitated, Art said,

"Give it here then. I'll look after it."

Lupinsky, who had been sitting there all the time clutching his hands and his eyes starting out of his head with misery at the sight of money lying in the sand, gave a shout.

"That's the boy," he said. "We've got 'em."

We all felt uncomfortable with Harry and we went away in ones and twos and Mrs. Law went out still crying. After she went out, Art went too and when we got down the street Art stopped and told Mrs. Law he wasn't going to take the money and he made her take it back. She clutched it with both hands and looked at him like a dog with gratitude.

That night half the men in Terence Street wanted to take up their lino and sat up late arguing with their wives: but the madness was still in the air, especially when Earl Street, hearing our news, sent all their kids up West and passed us. There was a fight in the High Street between our kids and the Earl Street kids and one of ours lost her box. But there was nothing in it except stones. They put stones in to make a rattle so that people would think they were doing well. If there had been any money in that box there wouldn't have been a pane of glass in Earl Street left.

"They've passed us," the cry went down our street. In the middle of this Mrs. Law came over to Art and gave him back the money. She made him take it.

"Your husband made you," says Art.

"Him," she said scornfully. "He don't know anything about it. I told him you gave it me back and he said, 'A good thing too,' he's feeling sorry for himself. I'll teach him to touch my money, I said. If there's going to be any giving in this house, it's me that's got the money. I'm going to teach my husband a lesson," she said.

This surprised Art for he had been very sorry for poor Mrs. Law and had shown it. But I've no doubt she was tired of being pitied. That money was all she had. She was going to show us that the Laws had their pride and she wasn't going to let them down. Only *she* was going to give it.

Her eyes shone and were sharp. They were greenish miserly grey eyes yet she was not miserly. Now she was proud and not bedraggled with tears and misery, she looked jubilant and cunning. She had been a gay, quick-tongued woman in her time.

"I kept it under the floor. That was wrong of me," she said. "I oughter have put it in the Post Office."

She said she knew her husband was right. It was not right to hide money.

Everyone in Terence Street had supposed Mrs. Law to be a poor, timid, beaten soul and Art had always thought the same, he said; but now he said that she had some spirit. She had opened her heart to him because he had been kind to her and now she said, very proudly, that he should come and have a chat with her husband. She took Art triumphantly to her basement just to show her husband there were other men in the world. Old Harry Law saw this at once—he was always on his dignity—so he just talked largely to Art about the shops he had had, the ups and downs, his financial adventures. Investments, he called them. We had all heard of investments but none of us had ever had any. If he had his life over again, Harry Law said, he'd invest every penny.

"There's a man," Art said when he went, "who doesn't practise what he preaches." But he respected Harry's preaching though he despised him a bit. And Harry said, "There's a man who stays the same all his life. Never made a penny, never lost a penny. The only money he's got," said Harry, "isn't his—this collection."

And Harry asked him how much it was. There were some thirty odd pounds, Art said.

Harry respected him when he heard that and said with a sigh, "Money makes money."

When Art got back his sister was short with him. "Going after other men's wives!" she said. And she lectured him about Mrs. Law. It had been such a warm, pleasant, friendly evening over at Harry Law's that Art was hurt about this.

"Him and her," he said, "has got more brains than you think. They've lived, all right. They've had their ups and downs."

"He's a boozier."

"We've all got our faults. He's had his ups and downs."

And that was the phrase that he kept repeating. It fascinated him. He felt generous. It came to him that he had never felt anything for years. He had just gone on standing in the High Street by the stall. He had never taken a holiday. He had never bought himself anything he wanted. He had never done anything. It startled him—but he suddenly did not want his wife who was in the grave. The street had chosen him, singled him out above all others, and there he stood naked, nothing. He was shy about his nonentity. He felt a curious longing for ups and downs.

You will say how did we know what Art Edwards thought?

That was the strange thing : we did know. We knew as if he had told us, as if we were inside him. You see, because we had singled him out he was, in a sense, ourselves. We could see him thinking and feeling and doing what we would. He had taken the burden off us. By doing that he had become nearer and more precious to us than any other person.

And there was Terence Street £2 ahead of Earl Street, drunk with the excitement of it. Art used to get out the money and count it—it was the biggest sum of money he had ever seen—and a sober pride filled him. He had done this. People like Mrs. Law had just thrown in all they had. He had put in his bit cautiously, but everyone had scraped and strained and just wildly thrown in the cash. It made him marvel. He marvelled at us, he marvelled—as his hands trembled over the money—that he had been picked out by us to hold it.

We went round once or twice to look at the money too. What a nest egg, what an investment! Over thirty pounds! We said we wished it was ours. We said we wished we could give more, or double it. We all wanted to double it. We looked at it sadly. "If that twenty pounds had been on the winner to-day," someone said. "Or on the dogs."

We laughed uneasily. And we dreamed. The more we looked at that money the more we thought of things you could do with it—mad things like backing a horse or sensible things like starting a business or having a holiday.

When we got up in Art's kitchen and saw him put the money in the cupboard and lock the door, we nodded our heads sadly. It was like burying the dead.

"It's sad it's got to go," we thought.

And it seemed to us fitting that Art who had buried the dead and who was a dour man with iron grey hair and level-looking eyes, should have the grim task of keeping that money, like some sexton. And we were glad to have him doing it, to have him be responsible instead of us. For some of us had to admit we'd go mad at times with temptation tingling in our fingers and hissing like gas in coal in our hearts.

When we left him we felt a kind of sorrow for Art for bearing our burden, for being the custodian of our victory over Earl Street.

It made us all very friendly to Art. The time went by. We used to stop and have a word with him in the street. And Art became friendly too. But he wasn't at the "Freemason's" much. He went over to Mrs. Law's. And Harry Law didn't go on the booze. He stayed at home talking largely to Art. Once or twice Art went out in the

evenings with Mr. and Mrs. Law. Lupinsky used to see them up at the Pictures.

Lupinsky was our reporter of everything and gradually, expressing no doubt the instinct of the street, he had become our reporter on Art Edwards. We wanted a friendly eye kept on him not because he was valuable but because he was—well, as you would keep an eye on a sick man, say, a man who might have a heart attack or go dizzy in the street. When Lupinsky came back and said, "I see Art Edwards getting on a tram," we used to look up sharply and then, annoyed with ourselves, say, "What of it? What was he doing, having a ride?"

That Jew used to make us tired. And he'd started worrying already about the catering. They'd started arranging about the catering already in Earl Street. "It's a funny thing," we said, "about the Yids. He's only been here fifteen years and you'd think he'd been here for ever. Anyone 'd think he'd been born in the street. You'd bloody well think it was Jerusalem."

We had been born there, most of us, and we said, "It *will* be Jerusalem soon."

But we would have been nowhere without Lupinsky.

And then one morning he came along and said,

"Seen Art?"

"No," we said.

"He's not up in the High Street," said Lupinsky. "And he's not at his house."

"What of it?" we said.

Lupinsky was breathless. All the pimples on his face seemed about to burst. He had the kind of red hair that is coarse and stands up on end and thick arched eyebrows which were raised very high but were now higher for his eyes were starting out of his head. There were always bits of cotton from tailoring on his clothes and he was as I have said rather humpbacked from leaning all day over his machine.

"I saw him last night at the station. Nine o'clock. He took a ticket on the North London and hasn't been back."

"Smart baby," we said. But we were thinking of Lupinsky. We didn't believe him and yet we did believe him. "What were you doing up at the station—brother had another fire?" we said. Lupinsky's brother was always having fires.

But it was true. Art hadn't been home that night and his sister was very shiftily when we went to see her. We never liked Art's sister and we grinned to think he'd got away from her for a night.

"Art had to go away on business," she said.

Theirs was a tidy house and Art's sister worked hard in it. The window sills were hearthstoned. That woman never stopped. She always came to the door with an iron in her hand or a scrubbing brush or with something she was cleaning or cooking. She was a tall, straight-nosed woman and she had the best teeth I've ever seen, but there was no thickness in her, no give.

She used to say, "I've never had justice done me."

And Art used to sigh and say, "I can never do justice to her."

"What about it now?" said Lupinsky, who was waiting for us.

"Art can go away if he likes," we said. "Why not?"

"Sure yes, why not?" said Lupinsky. "What you worrying about?"

Later on Lupinsky came and told us Art was still away. His stall was still in the lock-up and he hadn't been down to the market. Lupinsky had a friend who had told him. Then Lupinsky had another friend who said he'd seen Art at Wembley.

"Too many Yids here," said Albert Blacker. "You can't move but you catch one in your clothes. What's up with Wembley?"

We went over to Mrs. Law's and called down to her. She was ironing in the light of the window.

"See Art Edwards?" we said.

"No," she said. "He hasn't been here for two or three days."

"Oh," we said.

Then Harry Law got up from his chair by the stove and said, "Art gone?"

"We're just looking for him. Thought he might be with you?"

Mrs. Law gazed at us and then she looked at her husband. She was one of those women who when anything serious or unexpected happens, when they don't know what to think, when they are bewildered, always turn to their husbands; as if by studying him she would always know the worst about any event in the world and would be prepared. It was like looking up something in a book or gazing into a crystal. And when she had gazed at her husband and thought about him, she said, "Oh dear." And she put down her iron and her shoulders hunched up. She looked accusingly at her husband and he lowered his eyes. He knew she could read him like that.

We did not think so at the time but afterwards we said we had the feeling that when Mrs. Law looked at her husband in that accusing way, she knew something about Art Edwards that we did not know. It turned out that she did not know. I looked out of the window that night when I went to bed. It was a warm night. I work in a fur warehouse and the air had the close, dead, laid-out smell of ladies' furs. There was a cold hollow lilac light over the roofs from the arc

lamps in the High Street. At night our street is quiet and often you can hear the moan of a ship's syrens from the river like the hoarse voice of someone going away. But the commonest sound is the clinking of shunting trucks on the railway—a sound that is meaningless as if someone who couldn't play the piano had struck the keys anyhow, trying to make a tune. It is a sound which makes you think the city has had an attack of nerves. As I stood there on one leg, undoing my boots, I heard quick footsteps coming along. They were Lupinsky's. Lupinsky was always up late.

"I say. I say," he called up to me. "Art's come back. I just seen him. He came back and let himself in."

That night Art Edwards went into the lock-up in his yard and, attaching his braces to a hook in the roof, he hanged himself. The box in the cupboard was empty. He had gone off to Wembley and lost all the money on the dogs.

We went out into the street in the morning and stood outside the house and stared at the windows. The people from Earl Street came too. All the children came and stared and no one said anything in the street. Albert Blacker went into the yard at the back and Lupinsky was there with the police. Mrs. Law would not leave her house but stood on her doorstep holding the railing tightly, watching from a distance. Harry Law would not come out. He walked up and down the room and called up to his wife to come down. He could not bear being left alone. She was afraid to leave her house and yet, I thought, wanted to be with Art.

"The bloody twister," we said between our teeth.

"That bloody widower," we said.

"Takes our money and has a night out. Our savings! Our money!"

"The rotten thief."

We muttered like this standing in front of the house. We were sorry for the police who had to touch the body of a man like that.

"You wouldn't trust me," Lupinsky said.

We looked at him. We turned away. We couldn't bear the sight of that man's pimples.

"I'm used to money," Lupinsky said.

I could not repeat all the things we said. I remember clearly the red, white, and blue streamers drooping over the street and looking dirty, with "God Save the King" on them. "God Save Art Edwards," said Harry Law coming up. He was tight.

We thought of the spirit of Art Edwards's sister being humbled. All down the street, at all the windows, the women leaned on their bare arms thinking about this. They cuffed their children and the children cried. There was the low murmur of our voices in the

street and then the whining voices of children. Presently a couple of women came down, pushed their way through the crowd and went in to help Art's sister. We gaped at them.

And then Lupinsky, who gave the lead to everything and always knew what we were thinking underneath, said, "They're jeering at us in Earl Street."

They were. We set our teeth. Kids came round shouting "Who swiped the money-box! Who swiped the money-box!" Our kids did nothing for a long time. Then they couldn't stand it. Our kids went for the Earl Street kids. Some of our women came down to pull their kids off and this drew out the Earl Street women. In half an hour Albert Blacker came out of the "Freemason's" with his sleeves rolled up, just when the Earl Street men were getting together, and then Harry Law came out roaring. Mrs. Law ran towards him. But it was too late. A stone went and a window crashed and that brought out the rest of the Blacker family. We got it off our chests that night. We crowded into Earl Street. Half their milk bottles had gone before the police whistles went.

And then it was clear to us. We knew what to do. Lupinsky headed it as usual. Art Edwards was suddenly our hero. We'd kill the man who said anything against Art Edwards. In our hearts, we said, it might have been ourselves. Thirty pounds, we remembered the sight of it! We even listened to Harry Law.

"He was trying to double it at the dogs," he said. "Investing it. Every man has. . . ."

His wife pulled his coat and tried to stop him.

"Every man," continued Harry Law, "has his ups and downs."

And to show Earl Street what we were and to show the world what we thought of Art Edwards we got up the biggest funeral that has ever been seen in our street. He was ourselves, our hero, our god. He had borne our sins. You couldn't see the hearse for flowers. The street was black with people. The sun shone. We'd been round and got every stall holder, every barrow man in the neighbourhood. That procession was a mile long when it got going. There was a Jubilee for you, covered in red, white, and blue wreaths, Art Edwards our King. It looked like a wedding. The great white trumpets of the lilies rocked thick on the coffin. Earl Street couldn't touch that. And Lupinsky collected the money.



BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE FROM THE SOUTH SIDE

painting by A. STUART-HILL

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THE BOOKSELLER TO-DAY

By J. G. Wilson

(MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MESSRS. J. AND E. BUMPUS LTD.)

WHEN, in the summer of 1935, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was published in a volume at thirty shillings, the dead weight of the slump which had affected bookselling for nearly five years was felt to have lifted. It was a book which sold freely enough to persuade the booksellers that bookbuyers were no longer in hiding, and that given a good book there were people with money to buy it, many of whom had not been habitual frequenters of bookshops. It was fortunate for the trade that this book appeared in July, because had it come later in the year it would have cut across the busy season and reduced the chances of success with many other volumes. In a way, this incident reminded me of the first coming of the new novel in a single volume exactly forty years earlier. At that time booksellers were in the almost deadly grip of the discount system. The new novel form gave fresh life and hope to the book trade, although the relief imposed by the publishers in a net book agreement did not come, and then only in part, until the end of the century.

At this season of the year, when the main publishing output crashes into the book world, those traders who function as retailers to the reading public are filled with expectancy, sobered by uncertainty, as to what particular books will be in demand; and each year surprised by the unexpected one that bursts unfairly from obscurity to fame in December.

There is enthusiasm because the long tradition of winter business has seldom failed to produce good results. The present season promises to be one of the best. It is in the brief span of December that the bookseller may do a quarter of his year's trading; an absurd state of affairs. Those who lament in December the pandemonium that displaces the habitual calm and leisure of their favourite bookshop must remember that it is often a case of "no Christmas, no bookshop."

The appearance of an important new novel in the height of the summer of 1895 was an unprecedented affair. The regular seasons for publishing were spring and autumn; but that event brought a change which in gradual stages now sees the publication of new books on practically every day of the working year. Then, the two seasons were well defined, with quiet months between; time to grapple with

the output and prepare in respectable manner for the "rush" of December. That over, we returned to a normal pace till with Easter came another present-giving time, known to us as the miniature Christmas.

In the provinces we had periodical visits from the publishers' representatives when forthcoming books were shewn in leisurely manner, in the form of early sheets, bits of proof, and specimens of illustrations. Our appetites were whetted on morsels of the complete dish; conversations on the bookshop floor became pleasantly anticipatory. It was the day of book gossip, when all news about works in preparation was welcome and passed on to customers. Much of that pleasant atmosphere of good book-talk has gone; the immense output of our time and the speed at which we move have tended to make most bookshops impersonal places where books are displayed for sale.

In 1910, Nelson's, who, with Macmillan's, will be remembered in the annals of publishing for their pioneer work in adapting output to the public need, started a scheme for new novels at two shillings. Here is part of Nelson's announcement:

The novel is to-day *the* popular form of literary art. This is proved by the number of novels published, and by the enormous sales of fiction at popular prices.

While *reprints* of fiction may be purchased for a few pence, *new fiction* is still a luxury.

The author of a new novel loses his larger audience, the public are denied the privilege of enjoying his latest work, because of the prohibitive price of four-and-sixpence demanded for the ordinary "six-shilling" novel.

In another way both author and public are badly served under the present publishing system. At certain seasons a flood of new novels pours from the press. Selection becomes almost impossible. The good novels are lost among the indifferent and the bad. Good service can be done to literature not only by reducing the price of fiction, but by sifting its quality.

All this could be said with equal force to-day. It may be remembered that H. G. Wells's *Mr. Polly* appeared in that series. The public, for whose benefit such a scheme was arranged, did not take to the idea; nor, strangely enough, were the booksellers over-enthusiastic, although the profit on each one sold was more than on the six-shilling novel of the time.

This was one of the forward movements thrown out of gear by the War in 1914; the book trade may be returning to their consideration before long.

Popular series of an earlier generation listed the works of accepted standard writers. When Everyman's Library, entering its tenth

hundred, decided to add the books of living authors it was not because the notable books of the past had been exhausted, but because this contemporary demand was wisely met; and in doing so, this most wonderful of all series at once expanded its appeal to the new reading public, leading them through the books of the present to the great heritage embodied in its list. This "reading back" is one of the most hopeful signs of book buying to-day. And of a series like the World's Classics the same thing can be said.

The intense interest in contemporary literature and authors is seen also in the immense craving for books that will explain present-day political movements and social affairs. Titles of this kind are displayed and purchased in every bookshop. The Left Book Club is only a specialized form of this interest.

All this widespread demand for books is a constant challenge to the bookseller's knowledge of literature. By every post come inquiries of the most varied kind, all taking time to answer in a satisfactory way; queries requiring research are put to the assistants, and if some of them can be settled at once from the range of stock carried, others have to be dealt with as time permits. "Taste" cards on which customers have noted their special interests can bring into play the information about new publications, keeping "the book in touch with the man," the true function of bookselling.

The clearly defined sections of stock in a modern bookshop are evidence of a public interest in books that can be found to reflect almost every concern of mankind. There is no subject on which news about it cannot be obtained between the covers of a book. We have come, since the beginning of the century, to a desire for knowledge of all aspects of our daily lives and the problems relating to our fellows everywhere. Nothing now seems to be left out when ideas or information are wanted, from the latest report on the Opium Drug Traffic to the best work on Gardening, or from Bee-keeping to Child Psychology. Many of the inquiries come from people who are not readers in the generally accepted meaning of the word, but who, because their specific want is supplied, may be introduced to books in other forms; again, one of the opportunities of the bookseller is his job of widening the area of reading.

It is part of the bookselling record that few of the attempts to market *new books* at cheap prices have been continuously successful. We can go back to Fisher Unwin's Pseudonym and Autonym Libraries, to Heinemann's novels in paper covers, to Duckworth's Greenback Library, to the Mundanus Series of Gollancz, and others; all of them were experiments by great publishers to meet the criticism that new books had been too expensive to cover quickly the ready

and waiting buying public. Maybe it was the firm hold that the circulating libraries had in this country that prevented general acceptance. Those experiments certainly introduced many new writers to a widespread audience. But the attachment to the standard form of the novel, still persisting, was even more firmly settled by their efforts. This does not mean that the practical vision of the makers of those books was at fault, but it proved the conservatism of British book buyers in refusing to adapt themselves to foreign models. And I should not be surprised if another experiment, as might be projected from the more slimly bound and cheaper issues of recent Book Clubs, would be successful.

After all, the price at which a book can be published will depend on the number of people who want it and can afford to pay its price, and on the cost of making it. Given a sure market, some favourable adjustment of price can be made, and gladly made by the publisher. But every book is its own problem; it will never be possible to fit the free and individual thought of all writers into the same price mould. It is just this glorious uncertainty of reception that makes publishing an adventure.

At the moment the book trade is busily engaged, by means of Book Clubs and Penguins, in proving something quite untrue—namely that its prices are absurdly high, and that the whole thing is a racket. It is trying to convince those who still buy books that it is a Robin Hood enterprise, in which the rich are robbed of eighteen shillings in order that the poor may buy the same thing (less nine penn'orth of binding) for half a crown.

The price question was raised by the coming of the Book Society, with results to be seen in publishing lists to-day. In some instances the announced prices of chosen books were reduced in view of a larger immediate distribution. And the titles affected in this way were found to sell in increased numbers at the bookshops. This shows in which direction book-prices are moving. But as the chosen book is only one of many hundreds, the publishers, quite naturally, felt that the choice might react unfavourably on public reception of their titles at the former price level, and so an adjustment was made.

I think this experience supports the view that there are readers who could be weaned from library habit by a more attractive initial price. The present attitude of customers, freely expressed as all booksellers know, is to admit a desire to purchase with a reservation that the cost sends them for a first examination to their library. There is no more frequent remark in bookshops than this reference to price. It has always been so, but then it is true that works in general literature, particularly biographies and histories, are now cheaper

on their first appearance than they used to be. And as in the case of fiction, which came down to a popular level of purchase price almost at one bound, other classes of book may one day follow a similar course.

Another aspect of this movement in prices is the speed with which cheap editions follow the original issues. There are on sale now several cheap series of books in general literature at two shillings and half a crown with titles which only last year were selling at five and ten times their present prices. This form of cheap book could be described as the Publishers' House Club series. They are aimed at the somewhat mythical new reader and find their billets on the shelves of regular book buyers. It is not so much a bargain appeal, as a bringing of good recent books within range of the moderate purse.

Again, this practice, while it may be a retort to the Book Clubs, may also have been brought about by the clearance routine of circulating libraries in marketing at about one-third of the published prices their used copies not in immediate demand; practically every book after six months is made available to the public. And to a large degree the book-wants of smaller libraries both here and abroad, and to a growing extent of private buyers, are supplied in this way. A client has just written to me to say he will not buy a certain new volume at a guinea "because in a few months I shall get it at about four shillings."

The stocks held by publishers and booksellers are in many cases thus given comparatively short lives; and the booksellers, quite naturally, are forced to restrict their purchases so as not to be left with unwanted books on their shelves. When it is realized that the stock displayed in bookshops represents the capital of the bookseller, it will be seen how very quickly serious depreciation in values will set in if the market can be supplied otherwise with cheaper copies.

Because of such drawbacks in straight buying and selling the business of retailing books will not entice the best sort of young person to engage in it; there are risks at every stage, and the more enterprising the bookseller is in displaying for sale the best works of his generation the more risks there are. But it is a pleasant and fascinating field of labour none the less. To keep in touch with the merest fringe of a yearly output of seventeen thousand books is a trying affair, made all the more interesting by the constant requests for special displays from authors and publishers. Real joy can be got from helping the sales of worthy books, and from the contacts with readers who care for the best, from proper direction and introduction, and in the prevention of time wasting on the part of his client.

Bookselling, in my view, is a great and responsible business; and

when it is remembered that as a people we are as yet barely free from the swaddling clothes of education, the book trade, properly organized, must have an immense future.

The vogue of the Penguin can be nothing but a good influence on the reading public; those marvellous productions are once more, as with Nelson's famous Sevenpenny Library, introducing recent and living writers to millions of readers, many of them new to the idea of bookshops. It is true that for the moment their stupendous sales have slowed down the call for the three-and-sixpenny editions, unique in the whole world, the admirable small books, which fulfil Swift's dictum "to make the volume less commodius for Pocket-Carriage"; but experience consoles us that the excellence in format and production will bring them again into the favour of the young people, who are the book buyers of to-day.

What we need is a better levelling of book buying throughout the year in keeping with the year-round output of the publishers; a more constant book consciousness, for children as well as grown-ups. To some extent the stunts of certain publishing houses, and the group appeal of Book Clubs, are an effort to solve this problem. The excellent Book Token system has already taken us a long way in the right direction. Readers will not permanently be diverted from purchasing the best books which present the ideas of their time because of the hosts of cheap books and reprints. Accumulation of unwanted volumes from Clubs and Societies will not work a disgust in the minds of subscribers. All the admirable movements towards change in format, and new methods of presentation, in the interests of needy readers and potential buyers, will result in an active discrimination which will send in ever-increasing numbers purchasers to the bookshops.

But the success of bookselling in this country will not follow a merely passive and mechanical acceptance of the new business set in motion by nation-wide schemes to reach out direct to all possible buyers; it will need a steady development of the training and discipline now a part of the retailers' administrative work, a better knowledge of the book business as a whole, and perhaps, most desirable of all, a harmonious blending of the activities of publishers and booksellers in dealing with an ever-growing and changing market.

BEYOND SPACE

By Vaughan Owings

AS a child Thurlow had believed that the good who died went to Heaven. Heaven, to his infant credulity, was a place superiorly situated, in which happiness prevailed and labour was unknown. There was always music and sometimes dancing, and the angels—in Heaven everybody was an angel—were dazzlingly beautiful. In later years he learned to think of it another way. Heaven, it seemed, was not a geographical anomaly; it was an inner state of man. One needed only the power to invoke it.

There were, in the course of his life, moments when he believed he had attained this power; days, nights, when he seemed intoxicatingly near to holding his heaven, as it were, in the palm of his hand. But invariably the thing eluded him. At first, he attributed his failures to unproficiency; he hadn't the knack. But as he kept on trying and systematically failing, his modesty gave way to scepticism. He lost his faith in heaven. And from losing faith in heaven it was but a short step to losing faith in life. And then, before a great while, he fell ill—desperately ill.

He lay weak and silent for many days pending his dissolution, and during this interval, he was surrounded with adversaries. Even his wife, when he told her frankly that he wanted to die, wept as if her heart would break and begged him not to talk so. She endeavoured, with many a fond endearment, to make him see that if only he would get well again the whole world would be flooded with sunshine. Whereas——. Her distress was touching, but it was not enough to change the current of Thurlow's thoughts. He had been living—had he not?—these many years in deference to her wishes. And little good had come of it. And much suffering. Not that there would have been less suffering under any other arrangement; he was not blaming the individual. He was only sick of life, with its unholy sacrament of marriage and its beguiling, embittering dreams. He was only aching to be done with it for ever.

During this period an endless stream of callers came and went, proffering sympathy, proffering service, proffering anything and everything that might, in even the smallest degree, mitigate the sternness of circumstances. People Thurlow had given up for dead appeared, as by a miracle. People he had turned his back on contemptuously appeared, bringing coals of

fire. People he had helped a little, here and there, embarrassed him with their professions of devotion. He felt, at moments, like a pet geranium in a sunny window. Again, he felt like a creature on a rack, at the mercy of any and every passing inquisitor. The clergyman, trying to find his spiritual pulse while seemingly purveying entertainment only; the mental healer, declaring him well when anybody with half an eye could see it wasn't any use, he didn't want her kind of dope, all he wanted was to get away—from her, from everybody. And the stenographer, telling him how they missed him at the office, telling him he would soon be back at the office; exerting herself unnecessarily. He knew what she was thinking: Would he, or wouldn't he? And when? Always when his stenographer said, "I guess I'll have to go now," he sighed a sigh of relief. For reasons known only to himself, he wished she had gone before ever he set eyes on her. But life wasn't so easy as that.

Other business associates came, out of compunction, and out of compunction were admitted to the sick-chamber, since as Thurlow wonderingly observed, even the dying cannot escape the low-bred law of hospitality for hospitality. Among these was Cephas Monypenny. Thurlow had once borrowed a considerable sum from this gentleman, and he had paid it back cent for cent and interest well compounded; but there remained the feeling. . . . When Mrs. Thurlow, standing at the window, exclaimed, "O dear! There's Cephas Monypenny's car," Thurlow groaned softly. "Tell him to come up," he said.

So Monypenny came, bringing a whiff of cold air in with his somewhat purple face and his fur-lined greatcoat. A kind of hardness glittered around him, not like an aureole but rather like a whirlwind of infinitesimally minute steel splinters. He had the voice of a deep drum and the directness of a bullet. He was a man to be respected by persons who respected life. Even Thurlow, hearing the authoritative footstep on the stairs, raised himself a little higher on his pillows.

"Well, well," said Mr. Monypenny. "Hum. Ho." And he sat down, at Mrs. Thurlow's suggestion. He sat down magnificently, as a Buddha, melting for a moment and then immediately solidifying, might have sat down.

"Smoke if you want to," Thurlow said.

"No thanks," said Monypenny. "I won't stay but a minute." He looked round for Mrs. Thurlow, who was not there. He looked at Thurlow, who was there to be talked to. How the devil——? he seemed to ask the walls, the floor, the brightly coloured quilt. Then his eyes came back to Thurlow, and immediately a topic presented

itself. "I say, Thurlow," he asked with startling abruptness, "Where do you expect to go when you die?"

But Thurlow was not startled. He had been getting his answer ready for years. "Nowhere," he said.

Monypenny nodded approvingly. "I'm with you. All poppycock, this talk about a future life. Life's now or never, in my opinion. Get hold of it and wring it dry before it gets hold of you—that's what I tell my boy. You won't get too much out of it, at that." He clapped his right hand over his left, that cupped the knob of his heavy cane. He frowned portentously. "No, sir," he said. "Don't talk to me about immortality. I tell you there's nothing in it."

"Nothing," said Thurlow.

There was a short silence. Thurlow seemed to have said all he had to say on that point. So Monypenny took the floor again.

"Now my wife," he said, "she's mad about religions. Not a religion, mind you; it's one after another, with a woman like her. And yet, ask her what she herself believes, and she can't tell you. She's only, so far as I can make out, sure of one thing. We don't die. Our bodies wear out but our souls go on to new worlds with new occupational interests, so to speak. She's ridiculously vague about her new worlds, but lord! she's positive. I say, it's funny, isn't it?"

"Very," said Thurlow.

Monypenny waited for him to say more. But Thurlow's lips rested upon one another closely, and his eyes had a faraway filmy look that was somehow not reassuring. The visitor rose, rather hastily.

"I ought to be going," he said.

Thurlow said nothing.

Monypenny stooped and held out a hand in which the blood pulsed warmly. But his eyes were on the door. Then he drew himself up.

"I hope I haven't worn you out," he said.

"No," said Thurlow. "Nothing can wear me out."

* * * * *

So it had come to seem. But many things had seemed, and each in turn had been disproven. Even Thurlow knew that eventually his flesh would have to give way to his desire. For that was all that was the matter with him. He was sick of life, and he died (he would have said) of life.

* * * * *

Mrs. Thurlow now became the centre of interest. She became the recipient of every conceivable attention. Calls, letters, invitations

... drives. . . . Her house was a garden, with bells continually pealing through its hushed reaches. She breathed and moved in an atmosphere of human tenderness comparable to nothing she had experienced since she had left her mother's breast. Even her husband's tenderness had not been like this. It had been deeper, more pungently sweet; it had shaken her like a wind sprung from a glade that reached far back into the centre of the cosmos, had shaken her into momentary madness—and had passed. But this was wide and soothing, like a great cushioned hammock swung with silken ropes that gleamed as in a perpetual bath of sunlight. She could not, in her weariness, but sink into it gratefully.

Then gradually people changed. They began to think about themselves, to talk about themselves. They began to say that Mrs. Thurlow ought to think about something beside Thurlow. There was the future, they said; it was better to talk about the future. So she talked about it. Sometimes she didn't mention the past at all—just talked about the future.

But what is talk? The past was continually before her. It spread itself there like a film on which merely to countenance a thought was to bring out a blinding image. It haunted her, it harried her—the past. And if her memory had not supplied sufficient stimuli, there were the objects of her daily contemplation that had once been his. There were things that people said, the allusions they let fall and instantly regretted and could do nothing about. There were the people themselves—his people. And over and above all there was her own strange, solitary state, her “differentness.” Something was missing, and it was with that something that the undercurrents of her thoughts were always busy. It was that something that still forced her to acknowledge it at moments, in speech, in tears, in little sad sighs. . . . Her grief, people called it. Her grief she knew it to be, never doubting that she understood its nature.

Something was missing. Thurlow was missing. Mrs. Thurlow was grieving, she would have told you, because she wanted Thurlow back.

* * * * *

Now Thurlow had not believed in immortality. He had had, he felt certain, all that was to be had. The other, the wide speculation about heaven and everlasting happiness, meant nothing to him—simply nothing.

He was, accordingly, surprised to find that after that sharp pang, that fearful wrench, that awful subsidence. . . . But he could remember no more. He could only presume that he had died—apparently. But not in fact. That was the wonder. The very centre of him, the

thing psychologists would call his consciousness, was alive as it had never been alive before. Vivid, glowing, like a fiery furnace with the door left open and a strong wind rushing by. And the rest of him—what had become of that? He seemed to have no weight, no position. He could discover in himself no measurable dimension. Something was gone that had been an enormous burden. Yet nothing was gone. More was added. He felt confused, trying to think it out. But after all, why think it out? He *knew*.

He attempted motion and found himself curiously, delightfully volatile. He had but to fashion a thought, to dream a dream, and the force of his imagination did the rest. He moved with the ease of a star, but with even greater latitude. Stars have their appointed paths; whereas he could go, at the slightest impulsion of his desire, to any pleasure he chose. The name of this greatest of all benefits that had accrued to him through his release from a physical organism was, he decided—trying still, out of long habit of mind, to conceive of the things of life in terms of mere existence—freedom. He, Thurlow had attained to that!

So he thought in the first sweet hour of his awakening. Then something drew him back. Something caught at him, weighted him down so that he seemed to hang suspended midway between the pure sky where there is no interference and the gross earth with its inexorable law of gravitation. It was not the earth that was pulling him. He was sure. Nothing that had been so scorned and that so little needed his presence in order to further its own dear interests would be concerning itself about him now that it was rid of him. It was not his friends. He knew the nature of friends, their great capacity for kindness and their equally great capacity for indifference. He had no children.

It came to him at last. There had been someone—his wife, he had called her. And other names, sweet names at times, harsh ugly names at other times. She had clung to him when he was (false word!) dying. He recalled, and winced as the memory flooded over him, that he had wanted her to cling . . . had begged her . . . at the beginning. . . .

After a few experiments in flying (he knew as yet no better name for the new motion that was still not motion in the sense that it demanded an expenditure of energy), after a few delicious adventures in self-expression, then, he gave it up. There was no use in trying to go on, with somebody working against him like that. Denying him his happiness. He knew. She had done it before, had done it so often that he had grown accustomed (on earth) to her interference: he had come to believe that all men are in one way or another denied. . . .

But now she ought to let him alone. What good could her interference do, at best? He could not return. And she could not come to him save by relinquishing what he knew she would never part with voluntarily. She loved the thing she called her life.

His sense of earth and its small affairs was vague, like the after-taste of dreams; yet like such after-tastes it troubled him exceedingly. He could remember his own past with remarkable distinctness; but the things that were happening now, while they still had power to affect him, were no longer appreciable as shapes and sounds and definite motions. He could recall clearly enough how other women had comported themselves in their bereavement, but it was impossible to see what his own wife was doing. Whenever he tried to peer through the atmosphere encompassing the earth, and especially when he attempted to spy out the particular locality that had once constituted the home of his frail flesh, it was as when a mist comes over one's spectacles and the blue sea turns to grey and the road loses its boundaries. He could make nothing of it. He only knew how women are, how human beings are, how life (as they call it) is. There were things called tradition, loyalty, ideals. . . .

Once more he settled down, in heaven as on earth, to patient waiting. But with a difference. From where he hovered in the still mid-region he was granted glimpses, astoundingly lovely, of the world in store for him. Hillsides came down and swung before his hungry eyes, unending banks of flowering mustard, waving, golden, like a bright sun diffused . . . till he closed his eyes again. Again wide, quaintly quilted fields sped past like landscapes seen from flying trains, with low hills in the distance, ochre and rose-red and flashing blue and sparkling emerald; ripe orchards ran beside the roadway; mountains as grey as twilight passed in swift succession, their lean green ribs threaded with pallid gold by an unseen showery sun; and skies rolled over him like imponderable cataracts of liquid silver, of molten gold; the one, the other; then the dove-grey, peace-grey sky of dusk. . . .

But it was all of a duskiness, all as if seen through clouded glass. Obscure, yet beautiful beyond any beauty he had dreamed of. Visions, he kept calling the manifestations of utter loveliness that flashed before him. Yet he knew they were not visions. They were realities. It was only on earth that such things were misapprehended.

* * * * *

On the anniversary of Thurlow's death his widow dreamed a dream.

The day had been a long one. First she had gone to the florist's,

then she had gone to the cemetery, then she had come home and read the letters over from beginning to end, and had cried heartily. The letters were so dear. The letters were, like Robin's death, so unbelievable. Oh, how he had poured his thoughts, his feelings, out to her in those pre-marriage letters! How he had passionately longed, and passionately admitted his longing, for the time when there need be no more letters because there need be no more intervening space. . . . He had been so impatient of delay. He had declared that she was the whole world to him, and would always be, and he would never leave her, once he had got her fast in the little place they were to call "our home." Lovers were one flesh, if they were true lovers. Always they would live together; then, when it came time to die, they would die, as nearly as might be, together. And so on and so on. . . . She sorted the letters over once more, and once more tied them up in neat little packages and laid them neatly in the box, and wrapped the box in fresh tissue and tied it around with a fresh rose-coloured ribbon. There was a reason for the rose-colour . . . ah me! . . . Then she bathed her heavy eyes elaborately, and got out more handkerchiefs, and began her daily telephoning, which had been considerably delayed.

But she did not go out again. Instead, she took up a piece of sewing—nothing in particular, just something to fix her attention on—and sat down for a long, uninterrupted vigil. She wanted to be uninterrupted. And yet, as the hours wore on and nothing happened, it began to seem to her as if no one but herself remembered. . . . And that made her sad in another way.

It was not until she had had her solitary dinner and was thinking she might as well go straight to bed—for, what with weeping and sewing through so many successive hours, her eyes were in no condition for reading, and to go on stitching would be worse—that someone came. Someone who remembered. Someone who cared.

Instead of going to bed early, she sat talking until midnight. Talking and occasionally weeping a little. For her visitor was sympathetic. He said, "Yes, yes," and, "I know, I know," in a way that soothed her inexplicably. He fathered her, he mothered her. "Poor dear," he said, "poor dear." And when he went away, just as he was leaving—— But she told herself a brother would have kissed her in precisely such a way—warmly, tenderly even, but after all relinquishingly. For he had dropped his hands from her shoulders and hurried off into the night with hardly so much as an audible "Good-bye." If he looked back, she couldn't see him; so she told herself he hadn't, of course, looked back.

She closed the door and locked it. Then she turned to go upstairs.

But in the mirror that hung at the foot of the stairs she encountered something startling. A haggard face with dark, swollen eyes—she had often seen that. What she had not seen for so long, she had thought never to find it looking out at her again, was the “glisten.” That was a funny word for it, but it was Robin’s word. The way a fine web glistens in the sunlight, very softly, very silkenly—that was the way her eyes did, so Robin had always said, on occasion. . . .

She turned away from the mirror. Slowly she ascended the stairs. Slowly she undressed and slipped into bed.

Before she fell asleep she cried a little more, she could not have told why. Perhaps it was because the house seemed suddenly so quiet. Or perhaps it was only because she was tired. She was very, very tired.

* * * * *

The dream came at dawn. She knew it was dawn because, when she awoke, the birds were singing. Though the world was still in darkness.

She looked up and saw Thurlow standing beside her, looking down. His face was painfully familiar. And yet it had never seemed so threatening—it was almost as if he hated her.

“I’ve come to ask a favour of you,” he said. “Surely—surely you’ll not refuse me?”

“What is it, Robin?”

“I want to be released—utterly.”

She gave a little startled cry. “Released?”

“Is it too much to ask, considering all I did for you when I was living?”

“You were perfect,” she said.

“No, not perfect. But I did what I could to make your life tolerable. I was a good husband.”

She nodded.

“And now I’m asking you to be a good wife—I mean to go on being a good wife. I’m asking you to do for me, gone, as much as you would have done for me if I had remained with you. Doesn’t that seem reasonable?”

“Yes.”

“Then let me go.”

Instead, she cried out sharply, “Oh, Robin dear, I love you—love you.”

He had not asked her for this. His face grew darker. “Surely you don’t want me back?” he said.

“But I do—I do.”

“Knowing how bored I was with it all?”

She was silent.

"Remembering the final wrench and how I'd have to go through it again?"

She closed her eyes. He was so terrible to look at. Glaring, like ice under sunlight.

"I admit it was different in the beginning," he said. "We were lovers then. But the glamour soon wore off. You know that as well as I do; only, being a woman, you're bent on keeping up appearances. And now, of course, you keep them up more assiduously than ever. Isn't that true? The eyes of the world are fastened on you, and you play up to the world."

"Robin!"

"Oh yes, you miss me. But why? because I had become a habit. It's a way women have—letting men shape their lives for them; then when they get their lives back again they don't know what to do with them. I'm sorry for that, but I can't alter it. I only know that what you're doing is worse than nothing; it doesn't help you, and it hinders me cruelly. Every sigh, every sob, every least word of wistful reminiscence that you utter, blocks my happiness. I'd have been on my way long ago, but for your mistaken clinging."

He paused, and in that swift moment his expression changed from indignation to a look of almost childlike appeal. He was, after all, helpless in his supreme yearning. "If only," he besought her, "you would take your life and use it—for yourself, for anyone you like. But not for me. I'm through, I tell you. All I want is to be off."

Suddenly he bent over her, bringing his face so close she thought she must surely suffocate. "Give it to me!" he cried. "Give me my freedom! I've got to have it!"

She was terrified. She tried to scream, but no sound would come. She tried not to look at him, but his fierce eyes held her fascinated. Oh, it was terrible—Robin talking to her like that—Robin—Robin——

Then it was that Mrs. Thurlow heard, above the beating of her own heart, that other clamour of little wild things waking in the darkness.

* * * * *

To Thurlow, held midway between celestial sunlight and earthly storm and stress, it became apparent that something had happened. The downward pull was appreciably diminished; and it continued to diminish. He tried his wings, tentatively. But there was no need to be tentative. He rose straightway, by easy volition, into the limpid gold and silver of a sunless sunlight, into the labyrinths of inexhaustible loveliness.

And simultaneously with this alteration in his outward circumstances there came an inward change. He had believed, on earth

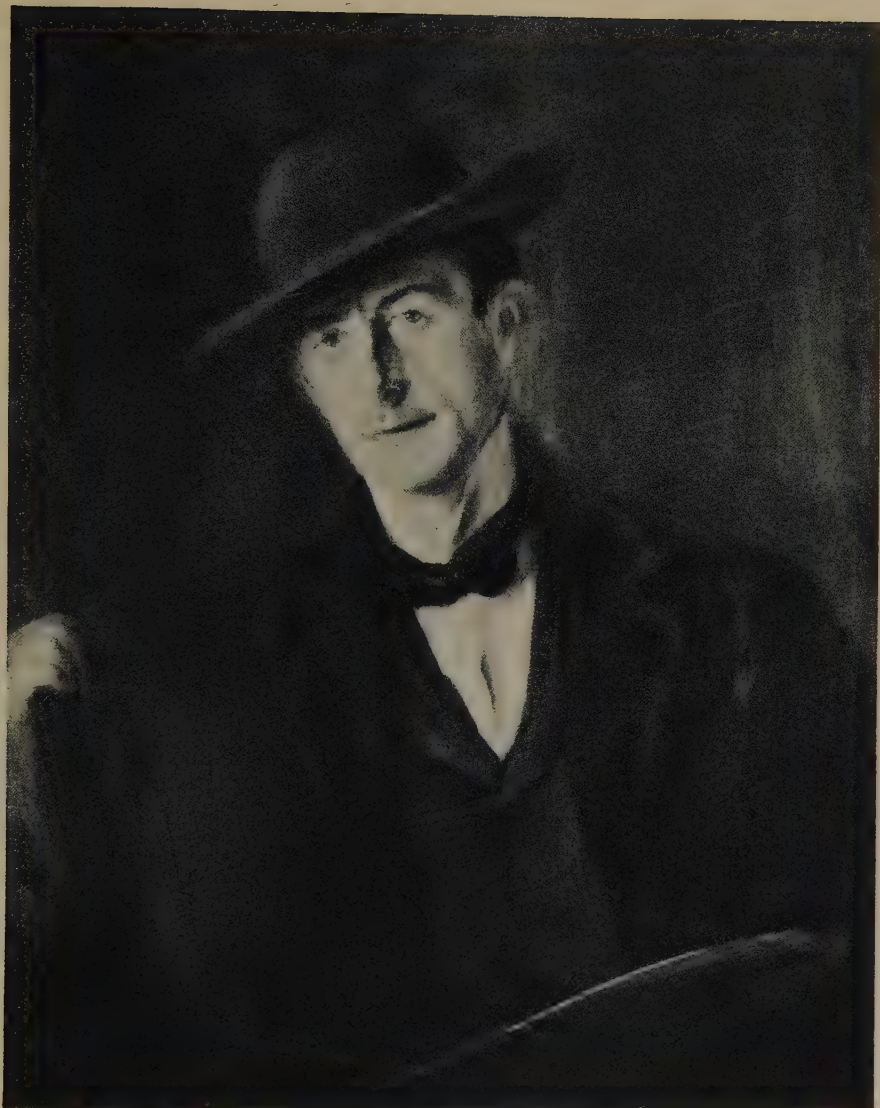
and so upon his entrance into the vaster domain, that there are satisfactions pertaining to the mortal sphere and constituting its dearest pleasures, which, if missed there, are missed for ever. And he had missed them; his flesh had spoken falsely, when all was said and done. The deeps of him had never spoken at all. Now suddenly the deeps were murmuring. His imagination was stirred afresh. Moreover, he had observed that in this beatific region it was not a platitude but a demonstrable fact that to seek is to find.

Pondering these things he paused one evening in a place made in the image—so he humorously put it—of what on earth is called a desert. He had come upon a mass of boulders piled magnificently and with the tall cactus known familiarly as Our Lord's Candles growing between. An altar to the desert's beauty. And that he might obtain a still more sweeping view of the majestic panorama he began to ascend the altar. But he had not climbed far when he came to a boulder laid so irresistibly horizontal that, with its three tall candelabra suggesting, now, a private apartment, he was constrained to accept it as a hostelry for the night. His weariness was not as the weariness of mortals; it was not in pain, but in gladness, that he laid his limbs on the warm, rosy rock.

The sun was sinking. A glory burned all round about him, bejewelling the sand and rocks and sky. Slowly as he lay looking to the east, the floor of the desert changed from the colour of fire to glowing copper, while in the distance the copper mountains robed themselves in ravishing crimsoned purple. And as he held his breath for wonder that even in Heaven ecstasy could reach such heights, he saw the shadow of his altar, moving with the speed of thought across the burnished plain, turn velvet russet red. Until it met the purple mountain, when its tip, bent sharply upward, turned sheer startling blue. . . .

It was then that he beheld, not in imagination but with his eternally living eyes, his heart's desire. She lay beside him. She was touching him. She was not looking at the wine-red shadow and the crimson-purple mountains lapped by that fierily blue tongue; she was looking at him. And as he looked at her she seemed to be that shadow, those mountains, that celestial flame. And then she seemed to be himself. . . .

Slowly the sunset fires gathered themselves together and rose up into the sky, hovering tenderly above the still desert. Slowly the rose gave way to blue. The stars trembled, whispered inaudibly among themselves, and stole to their appointed places. And Thurlow, who had said there was no heaven, laughed to think how he had been deceived. There is nothing but heaven, once a man has circumvented space, with its clutter of so-called substance.



RICHARD SICKERT, 1895

by JACQUES-EMILE BLANCHE

the property of Mr. John Rothenstein. Exhibited at Messrs. Arthur Tooth's Galleries

A review of M. Blanche's "Portraits of a Life-time" appears on a later page.

CET ANIMAL EST MECHANT

By An Englishman in China

"EVERY man," said Dr. Johnson, "thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier."

The Chinese have a proverb that, as nails are made only from iron of the poorest quality, so soldiers only from men of the least account.

The Chinese, having invented gun-powder, used it for fireworks, not artillery. The result of scientific invention in the West has been to endanger human life on a scale hitherto undreamed of.

By contrasts such as these it is customary to illustrate the pacific temperament of the Chinese, the lupine nature of Europeans. Yet in the last few weeks we have seen—to quote *The Times* correspondent—Chinese armies fighting like tigers; snatching, from beneath Japanese bombing planes, a reputation which, whatever the result of the war, will profoundly change the beliefs of the Westerners about the Chinese character.

* * *

That the typical Chinese is on balance a rather exceptionally peaceful person cannot be seriously questioned. Confucianism, the national system of ethics, is based on ideas of what is decorous, seemly conduct in adult—indeed, rather elderly—men; war is taken account of as a political phenomenon; but fighting between gentlemen is in general deprecated. Buddhism, one of the two chief religions of the country, carries its regard for life, animal as well as human, to an almost fantastic pitch. Chinese poetry, while not altogether insensible to the

Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war,

turns much more often upon war's waste, and its destruction of friends, gardens, palaces—all the amenities of cultivated life. The Chinese attitude is illustrated by the curious proverb, that a victorious army is a mourning army; Chinese armies are formidable, not in aggression, but when driven to action against their will and under intolerable provocation.

It must be confessed that the Chinese are more civilized than we are, in that the typical Chinese more keenly abhors, and despises, violence than the typical man of the West. Under provocation or stress of excitement they may commit violent acts; they are liable in such circumstances to a kind of hysteria, and this explains the

atrocities of which they have sometimes been guilty. Some of the poorest Chinese, moreover, display a peculiar callousness, the result of their terribly low standard of living and the blunting familiarity with squalor and suffering. But those more happily placed have a sensitiveness to physical distress so acute that the Chinese character has often been described as somewhat feminine.

* * *

But this is only half the story.

China, two thousand years ago, had a feudal system which endured for several centuries; and during this time fighting was the prime occupation of the aristocracy. The subsequent unification of the country, the elimination of the minor princes, and the adoption by the diverse tribes inhabiting it of the Chinese mode of life, was to a great extent the result of military action. The Han, Tang, and Ming dynasties, periods noted for their painting, literature, and porcelain, were hardly less remarkable for their military achievements; and the Chinese armies penetrated on one occasion to the Caspian Sea. As an imperialist power, China for long periods held down the tribes of Mongolia, Tibet, and Central Asia; at other times it was invaded and conquered by them. The alternate defence and expansion of its frontiers fostered martial traditions, developed a military science, and produced an illustrious succession of commanders.

Thus, though the military life was never regarded as the most honourable—the prejudice against it recalls the feeling in England in the past three centuries against a standing army—it was a profession practised continuously and systematically, and by many of the ablest men in the land. Nor, even during the disastrous nineteenth century, had these traditions seriously declined. The defeat of China by the British and French armies was due not to want of bravery of the Chinese soldiers, but to the overwhelming superiority of Western artillery; and the Boxer rebels, while they disgraced the Chinese character by their brutality, showed as great a disregard for their own lives as for those of their victims.

Though the Confucian scholars regarded themselves as superior to war, some of the minor schools of philosophy came to the support of the military life and virtues. They openly gloried in war; or were at least ready to sacrifice all the amenities of life in order to make the country powerful. One of these, King-sun Yang, of the so-called Legist school, has quite a Fascist ring:

A country where the strength has been consolidated is powerful, but a country that loves talking is dismembered. Therefore, it is said: "If there are a thousand people engaged in agriculture and war, and only one in the odes and history and clever sophistry, then the thousand will be remiss in agriculture and

war; if there are a hundred people engaged in agriculture and war and only one in arts and crafts, then all those hundred will be remiss in agriculture and war. . . ." If in a country there are the following ten evils: rites, music, poetry, history, virtue, moral culture, filial piety, brotherly duty, integrity and sophistry, the ruler cannot make the people fight, and dismemberment is inevitable.

The official literature of China—that which is officially regarded as the country's glory, as distinguishing it from the barbarian world—is its philosophy and ethics. The literature which is enjoyed, and, therefore, best reflects the national character, is the romantic novels and romantic drama. (This is, as it were, the pocket volume which the Chinese keep concealed between the sober folio covers of their classics.) Unfortunately, the romantic novels, except for one of the Tang Dynasty translated by Mrs. Buck under the title *All Men are Brothers*, are not available in English. Their heroes are men of action, soldiers and bandits whose lust for fighting would have made them a nuisance even in Valhalla, whose ready quotation of the Confucian maxims is matched only by their lack of respect for them. It is men of this type—and especially bandits—who, above all others, fascinate the imagination of the Chinese and (provided they do not appear in the flesh) engage their affections. This is still more evident in the Chinese drama, which, as the art catering for the masses of the people, and not only for the relatively small minority with a taste for reading, is perhaps the best guide to the Chinese mentality. Fighting occupies on the stage in China the place of love on the stage in London. There are no dramatic producers in the world, except the Chinese, who have succeeded in giving in the theatre a satisfactory representation of a battle; by Chinese producers justice might at last be done to the battle scenes of Julius Caesar and Macbeth.

Thus, in an analysis of the Chinese character, the fact of Chinese aversion from violence must be balanced by the fact of their romantic partiality for bandits and warriors; their sensitiveness by their liability to excited self-assertion; their Confucianism, and their deep desire for peace, by their military traditions, and their capacity, when intolerably provoked, for persevering defence.

* * *

From 1911, when the Manchu Dynasty fell, until recently, when Japanese aggression united the country, China suffered, in nearly every province, protracted civil wars. To a world which during the Great War had become accustomed to frightfulness, the courtesies exchanged and conventions observed in these Chinese feuds seemed amusing and even irresponsible. They recalled such incidents as the battle of the English Civil War, when, according to tradition, the armies temporarily parted to allow a fox-hunt to pass between them,

In the early period of the Chinese civil wars no general, except at the cost of losing all caste, "liquidated" another general. A defeated warlord would resign the "chairmanship" of his province, alleging, as a rule, his indifferent health as the reason; and his successful rival would see that he was put in sufficient funds to take a trip abroad, which the Central Government, continuing a shadowy existence at Peking, obligingly dignified into a mission of inquiry upon its behalf. The war being conducted on this footing, the common soldiers saw no reason why they either should conduct hostilities in such a way as to risk unduly life and limb. The soldier was a farmer's son who had enlisted because life on the farm was very hard; because, by remaining a farmer, he would risk being plundered by the soldiers, by becoming a soldier he could join in plundering the farmers. His prime object was to remain alive. His point of view is illustrated in the story recently told by Sir Francis Acland. Asked how much he earned a month, a Chinese private replied "Two dollars"; asked how much fighting he did, he replied, "Two dollars worth." A people who took their civil wars so frivolously could scarcely complain if their spirit and military ardour were called into question.

But as time passed, the civil wars changed in character. As the national reserves were frittered away, conditions throughout the country became intolerable. Upon the fall of the Manchu Dynasty, the old political system disintegrated, the administration in each province passing into the hands of the military and of a clique of landowners. The relaxation of the old customs; the spread of a demoralizing cynicism due in part to the weakening of Chinese culture in face of the invasion of Western ideas; the consequent abandonment of all restraint by the official classes, and their desire to purchase Western luxuries, and to raise their standard of living to equal that of the Westerners who had become resident in their country, led to an exploitation perhaps without parallel in the modern world. Throughout the nation there grew a demand for the re-establishment of ordered government, the expulsion of the war-lords, and social and economic redress.

This mood enabled the revolutionary party, the Kuomintang, to establish in 1927, after campaigns in which a novel ruthlessness had made its appearance, a new Central Government at Nanking. When the Kuomintang failed to carry out one of its promised and most-needed reforms—the expropriation of the landlords—its allies, the Communists, turned against it and raised the peasantry in a kind of jacquerie; and there began another long and bloody civil war. Desperate circumstances led to fighting as desperate and totalitarian as any which Europe could show. The battlefields were far in the

interior, and the details of the campaigns, and of the Soviet Government which for a considerable time sustained itself in Kiangsi province, are still only partially known. But it is clear that the war was in deadly earnest; and the military achievement of the Communists was remarkable. Outnumbered often by more than ten to one; armed only with machine guns and rifles, and opposed by armies equipped with all the apparatus of modern war; blockaded and short of food; their leaders tempted by repeated offers of amnesty and advancement: they nevertheless held their lines for nearly three years. When these were eventually overrun by overwhelming force, they retired in good order, made a march of over 2,500 miles to the other end of China, and established there a Soviet régime. The Communists have been charged with, and were probably guilty of, revolting atrocities; but their audacity and military genius were never called into question.

In December of last year, national sentiment, increasingly stimulated by the aggression of Japan, compelled Nanking to cease the civil war and plan with the Communists a common national defence.

* * *

Those best acquainted with the Chinese armies have grave doubts whether, in the absence of foreign intervention, resistance against Japan can be very prolonged. China has, it is true, once again surprised the military experts by the defence of Shanghai; the heroism of the soldiers is no longer doubted; and national unity, up to the time of writing, has been proof against Japanese intrigues. But China is terribly inferior in artillery, aircraft, and the industry upon which armies and armaments depend. It has, moreover, had time to train neither the technical personnel nor the staff officers needed for making the fullest use of the equipment available. By retiring into the interior, and fighting a guerrilla war on the model of the Chinese Communists, the Nanking Government might hope to inflict in the long run no less damage upon Japan than it has itself suffered; but whether it will choose this course will depend on the one hand on the terms of peace which Japan offers, on the other on the encouragement China receives from the Western powers. China may with some justice claim to be fighting in defence of its rights to trade and hold relations with the West. If the West is indifferent, China might well decide to agree as quickly as possible with its adversary.

The prospect of Japanese ambition and organizing ability linked with the man-power and resources of China is a new factor in world politics and—now that the fighting qualities of the Chinese have been proved—a very disquieting one.

POOR DIDO!

By Donald Cowie

SO his host met him at the station and drove him to a typical New Zealand homestead, said Streeter, and a high tea of cold sirloin and chicken, followed by a smoke in the fragrant garden, all among the melodious bleating of innumerable sheep, put him in such a contented frame of mind that he began to wonder why he had ever connected soul satisfaction with metropolitan journalism.

Then, of course, to bed in a breezy kind of room with sheets that had been stored in lavender, and an early awakening to sunshine and more of the aforesaid sheep noises. Streeter said that he felt quite exhilarated when he wandered down to breakfast on that first morning in his flannels and old blazer. Afterwards he strolled round the sheds and pens and places, and his first impression was confirmed. There had, indeed, been a little incident with a bellicose rooster, and one of the sheep dogs had snarled at him somewhat viciously, but these things had been expected.

Then Streeter startled us by declaring loudly that he took an instant dislike to Dido the moment he set eyes on her. It was her colour, a nasty mixture of white and grey, and the shape of her head, with the bulging wall-eye, and the shaggy mouth that aroused that sudden antipathy. He never had had much to do with the creatures, save in an impersonal way through the biased agency of the totalisator—oh! a horse—and the notion came into his head as soon as he entered the paddock that she might rush at him instantly. So he was not surprised when his forebodings were justified and she did.

Streeter wiped his brow in the agony of recollection. Positively he had not had such a fright since that memorable day when the President of the Bishopstoke Mothers' Guild had kicked him out of the grounds of the Deanery. He cleared the paddock fence in one vault, and dashed for the safety of the house. But unfortunately his host had been watching. Between gulps of laughter he told Streeter that Dido invariably took that line with strangers. It was her playful little way. She liked a bit of fun.

But Streeter could not be consoled, however much he tried to see the humour of the incident. All he could think of was the big stained teeth of the beast and the ugly look in her eyes. So he broke away from his tormenter, went up to his room, and endeavoured to shiver the matter off.

He felt better by the evening. After he had been able to assert

himself at the meal table by elucidating a difficult passage in the newly arrived morning newspaper, he began to see his adventure in clearer perspective. But his host would not forget. He told Streeter about the curious and dangerous behaviour of a certain racehorse he had known. There had, he said, been many cases where horses had inflicted grievous injury upon those to whom they had taken a dislike. His host enlarged upon this theme until Streeter eventually went to bed in a worse state of nerves than ever; he could not sleep a wink; and when in the grey dawn he heard from afar a high-pitched, challenging neigh, he wondered why he had been such a fool as to come to this perilous place.

Accordingly he refused his host's invitation to ride with him that morning into the adjoining township and participate in some equestrian sports there; and he announced that he would take a long walk into the fields finally to clear his lungs of the clogging city air.

It was a great thought. Streeter's moist eyes glistened. It had occurred to him while he was dressing, and had seemed like an inspiration. So long as he got away from the neighbourhood of that accursed horse he would be easy. Why, then, shouldn't he go each day for a long walk, that would take him far from the farm and its terror?

At this point Streeter became lyrical. His voice sank low. He described the beauty of the scenery that accompanied him as he strode away manfully from the farm-house; he told of the heavenly twittering of the lark that had constantly poised above him; and he recollected the marvellous purity of the atmosphere. At last he was free, and with the world before him and a small packet of sandwiches in his pocket, he experienced for the first time in several months what he described as absolute happiness and pure joy of living. In due course his path took him to the edge of a hill and when he had reached the summit he found beneath him the beginning of the belt of virgin bush that stretches right round the western side of the Macgregor Range. The path led on and down and through the bush, and soon Streeter was walking beneath that tangled canopy, interspersed with rays of sunlight, that he had read so much about, but that he had never seen. This was the life!

He came to a glade with a mossy log and a trickling creek, and there he sat down to eat his sandwiches. He proceeded on his way after his repast, he said—and the tears again started into his eyes—with exactly the same sort of feeling he had had on those occasions thirty years before when his mother had given him twopence, and had told him to go away and not come back till evening or else she'd thicken his ear. Everything was so new and strange, the fresh damp

trellis of creeping plants, the soft leafy path underfoot, the singing birds everywhere. Soon the way became even more overgrown and dark; evidently he was reaching the very heart of the bush. When—what was that? A strange sound.

(Streeter paused, with his glass in mid-air. We listened with him, mainly to young Murray's breathing.)

And that, Streeter asserted, bringing his glass down with a bang on the counter, was the most terrible moment of his life. At first he could not believe what his ears so callously told him; then he was dreadfully convinced. Hoofs they were that he had heard, hoofs; and now what was it that he saw turning the bend a short way down the path, galloping with neck outstretched and familiar teeth bared and parted—what was it? Streeter rested his head on his arms to utter the answer. He hesitated. We helped him: "D-Dido!"

Streeter had to pause for a while. Then he resumed in a rough voice. The moment that terrible realization dawned upon him his brain began to act furiously, and, seeing his advantage, he at once turned off the tangled path to plunge into the far more tangled bush at the side. Down, down he went, he said, not pausing for a moment to look behind him; until suddenly he came to a kind of clearing on the hillside where there were about fifty yards of open tussock to another bush wall beyond. How he fled over this space! At all costs he must reach the trees before his enemy reached him, or else he would be done. He was none too soon. When he reached the shelter he turned round for an instant, and there, galloping down the open stretch he had just covered, foam streaming from her gaping mouth, was—D-Dido! Again Streeter resumed his frantic plunging, the terror driving him on, through matted creeper growths, over stumbling logs, his clothes tearing from him, his breath coming in short gasps. Would he be able to do it?

Then the way became even more precipitous, and there was a moment when a small gully lay across the path. He couldn't afford to waste time scrambling down into it and up the opposite side. He gathered the remainder of his energy, and took a tremendous leap—and, by extraordinary fortune, he landed safely. The crashing of his pursuer behind was loud and ominous. On Streeter sped. Then, suddenly, came a heartrending scream. It sounded like four-wheel brakes. A scream, then silence.

Streeter said he knew at that moment he was safe. Something told him. He stopped, listened, and slowly retraced his steps.

And surely enough, when he reached the gully of his famous leap, there, lying on her side at the bottom, with one of her legs

strangely twisted beneath her was—D-Dido! Alive she was, her eyes malevolent still, but the creature was very definitely hors de combat. (Loud shriek from young Murray.)

Of course the relief was such, Streeter continued impetuously, that he felt just like sitting down there and then and being extremely ill; but the presence of the dangerous animal was still intimidating enough to make him think twice about dalliance, and he set off as fast as he could to reach absolute safety. It was a long trek, and a very tiring one after the excitement of the chase; but he hardly noticed the miles that brought him nearer home. And, finally, the luxury of that armchair, the satisfaction of that brimming whisky!

A beautiful look transfigured Streeter's purple face, and he swayed rhythmically from side to side, as if in time with the memory. Some sympathetic person—I forget who it was—offered to buy him another beer, and for many moments there was only gurgling. Then young Murray had to ask Streeter how his farmer host had received the news of the disabling of his horse.

The light left Streeter's eyes; once more he sagged against the counter. Again he dropped his face into his hands. Then he whispered, so softly that we could hardly hear the words: "That is the trouble. I didn't tell him. I left for home that night."

Whereupon young Murray took a deep breath and muttered: "Poor Dido!"

Which effectively broke up the party.



*Wood engraving by JOHN BUCKLAND WRIGHT
by permission of the Dulau Gallery and The Redfern Publishing Co.*

THE PUBLISHING SEASON

To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY AND BOOKMAN

SIR,—Mr. Faber says that English books are “too cheap.” Too cheap, perhaps, to show a profit on their sumptuous production, but much dearer, surely, than books need be. An ordinary French novel cost, before the recent fall of the franc, about 2s. 9d. How can people be prevented asking themselves whether they want to pay another 4s. 9d. for a heavy cloth binding? Mr. Faber, anticipating some such argument, goes on to remark that no publisher “who values his reputation” will dream of employing cheaper materials. That has long been the attitude of English publishers, and it is an inspiring one. But it has kept up the price of books until the reading public has been driven to the circulating library. In more ways than one the libraries, in their turn, tend to keep up the price of books. If, nowadays, public and publishers are both dependent upon the libraries, the situation is one for which the publishers are largely responsible and about which there is little to be done, except grumble. As an ordinary reader, I should have supposed that, instead of publishing a mass of utterly ephemeral novels in damnably everlasting shape, and then later offering the proved successes in cheap and flimsy volumes, it might have been more logical to follow the Continental practice of introducing all books in cheap editions and only later producing in more handsome and permanent form those works which have shown themselves to possess some durable appeal. What, in short, is the good of manufacturing articles to last a lifetime, and priced accordingly, when the demand for them is not likely to survive two months?

Faithfully yours,

V. A. POPE



Wood engraving by JOHN FARLEIGH

From “Pax Obligato” by HERBERT J. MARKS (Cresset Press, 6s.)

THE THEATRE

I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE. By J. B. Priestley. Royalty.

AUTUMN By Margaret Kennedy and Gregory Ratoff. St. Martin's.

THE DANGEROUS AGE. By Edith Ellis. Embassy.

MR. PRIESTLEY'S triumphant pounce on Time as a conception fit to be discussed in the theatre has already justified itself in one good play. To embark on a trilogy was probably a mistake. One would expect the metaphysics to gain ground at the expense of the drama, and certainly *I Have Been Here Before* is more nearly a metaphysical argument than was *Time and the Conways*. It is a demonstration of how Time works. We are not asked to wonder whether or why Janet Ormund loves the young schoolmaster who is going to take her away from her husband. Dr. Gortler tells them that what they are doing they have already done countless times before. They are destined to do it countless times again unless his intervention should cause someone to break the vicious circle. If no one transcends the circumstances the usual consequences will follow. The husband will shoot himself in the garage of the inn at which they are staying, his business will collapse, the schoolmaster will lose his job, he and Janet will end their days quarrelling in sordid Bloomsbury lodgings, and the innkeeper's small son will be defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of learning, since the school at which he holds a scholarship will close. The rights and wrongs of the love affair are not in question; we have merely to watch the unhappy husband's effort to end it as, according to Dr. Gortler, it has never ended before. After an inward struggle, the reality of which is conveyed by admirable stagecraft and grand acting, the husband hands over Janet with the assurance that this time he will not shoot himself. And when the runaways have gone, he calls in the landlord and instead of ordering yet one more bottle of whisky he falls to talking as Shallow talked to Slender: "How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair? . . . Thereafter as they be. . . . And is old Double dead?"

Thus we know that this small group of human beings has climbed laboriously up the spiral of Time; and we may leave the theatre speculating, if we take the German professor's theory of Recurrence and Intervention seriously enough, on the effect which the success of this group will have on the future lives of other groups whose good or ill fortune they determine. But in any case we shall be grateful to the author and to the actors for the skill and concentration with which they have laboured to make the theory plausible and exciting. Restraint is the mark of the acting throughout. There is not a false or unnecessary touch in Mr. Lewis Casson's omniscient professor or in the Yorkshire innkeeper and his wife, played with the utmost veracity and disdain for easy laughter by Mr. William Heilbronn and Miss Eileen Beldon. One will not soon forget Mr. Wilfrid Lawson's portrait of an ordinary man seeking escape in work and drink from bitter disillusionment; and Miss

Patricia Hilliard and Mr. William Fox are admirable as the automatic lovers.

Autumn, the new piece at the St. Martin's Theatre, will in all probability absorb more popularity than any conceivable trilogy on Time before it is forgotten. This story belongs to the cheap magazine, but the mechanically forced situations justify themselves by the scope which they give to subtle emotional acting. Lady Catherine Brooke, the wife of one eminent counsel, is the lover of another, and she is forced to read to her temporarily blinded husband an anonymous letter disclosing her guilt. So fiercely is she cross-examined that, in a moment of panic, she explains her lover's visits to the house by asserting that he is in love with her step-daughter. The lover's vanity is equal to the opportunity which her foolish lie suggests, and when he has fallen deeply in love with Monica the play has situations and to spare. Lady Catherine cannot conceal her unutterable woe from her husband, who unmasks her publicly with a ruthless ingenuity in keeping with his reputation in the courts. The unsophisticated Monica has to pass from youthful to adult love by way of disillusionment, hatred, and despair. And the two barristers have to swallow their vanity by slow and painful degrees. There is nothing meretricious about Miss Flora Robson's study of a middle-aged woman in an emotional cul-de-sac. Its values are always quiet and consistent, but they are acting values and are often at variance with the values of the story. Miss Victoria Hopper makes an affecting figure of the young girl who runs away from the shocking facts and then comes home to face them and, a trifle tamely, subdue them to her purpose. Mr. Wyndham Goldie and Mr. Jack Hawkins both contend cleverly with the rather ill-defined characters of the hard-shelled barristers. It is a piece of serviceably theatrical domestic drama.

The case of the middle-aged woman who sets her heart on a younger man was treated with less solemnity in *The Dangerous Age*, a play based by Miss Edith Ellis on novels by Karen Michaels. In this case the heroine leaves her humourless husband after twenty years of calculated toleration and takes herself off confidently to an island hermitage. She gives the young architect who is infatuated with her the noblest reasons for dismissing him, but after a winter on the island she sends first for her youthful lover and then for her husband—only to learn that she has worn far from well in their heart's core. The development of the plot is all very arbitrary, but here again the actors came to the rescue of the play, Miss Jeanne de Casalis discovering in the woman a sincerity and a charm that were not in the writing, and Mr. James Dale imposing a nice-day humour on the puppet of a husband and Mr. Tom Belmore and Miss Hermione Hannen making an attractive case for youth.

A. V. COOKMAN

ART—BARBARA HEPWORTH

THE predominant quality in Miss Barbara Hepworth's sculpture at the Reid and Lefevre Galleries is plasticity. I would not attempt to explain the nature of the emotional reactions evoked by this quality. Indeed, with the development of psychology as a science, their nature is probably best left to the psychologist to define. But I may, perhaps, indicate which of the emotional reactions to form I am intending, by saying that it is those with which Mr. Berenson was concerned in putting forward his theory of tactile values. That is not to say that I agree with Mr. Berenson's theory—it is, for one thing, a little too simple to be really satisfactory, but it does at least make clear to anyone who has had reasonably varied artistic experiences, not only that there is a plastic element which can be abstracted by the mind, but also that this element can be abstracted in the transmutation of an object in the natural world into an object of art. Furthermore, I may go thus far with Mr. Berenson, as to agree that the emotional reactions to plasticity are bound up with an unusually vivid sense of tactile qualities in the object. The predominance of this quality in the work of an English artist is particularly interesting, as we are peculiarly insensitive to it as a race. The comparative setness of our sculpture, one of the arts from its nature most concerned with plasticity, is a witness of this, the absence of the quality from our painting is another. Etty shows the strongest sense of it, but even he makes a poor showing by international standards.

Sculpture is one of the arts in which by its nature plasticity is a matter of necessity, not of choice. This is not, however, to say that plasticity is the only quality with which sculpture may concern itself. Such a fine example of plasticity as the cowherd carrying a calf across his shoulders, in the Acropolis Museum at Athens, shows how this quality can be combined with a profound expression of emotions of the order of tenderness and serenity. The wonderful linear rhythm in the fan-like arrangement of the skirt, in the rippling folds of the chiton, and in the zig-zag lines of the conventionalized hair of the chorai in the same museum, is an instance of how another kind of emotional stimulus may be overlaid, in the metaphorical as well as the literal sense, upon the plasticity beneath. It is, then, all the more remarkable that Miss Hepworth, as an English artist, should not only show a strong plastic sense, but should so very largely concentrate on this to the exclusion of other qualities. In her work, as in most abstract art, one can often trace the probable starting-point in nature, in shapes suggestive, for instance, of the human form or of ships lying on the beach. Miss Hepworth has not obscured the issue by naming her sculpture after the original starting-point. Her interest is in certain qualities only in the natural object and she makes her adjustments logically in accordance with it. She shows an interest in a number of formal qualities, in the rhythmical variations, for example, afforded by spheres and spherical hollows, or in the relationships of other somewhat

similar forms, but before anything else her work succeeds or fails in accordance with its power to work the stimulate sense.

A very fine example of this is No. 13, *Blue Ancaster*. What precisely it is on the under surface of this shape, in the subtle changes from concave to convex, and from softly changing planes to sharp edges, which evokes in the mind a vivid, thrilling sense of form as an absolute outside oneself, is, I have suggested, best left to the psychologist to determine. But the contemplation of the work shown in this exhibition—particularly of No. 18, *One Form in Two Planes*, where the reference to nature is most evident—does suggest, at least to the unscientific, that this unusually clear apprehension of form is connected with instinctive human reactions to the human figure. That in the particular instance quoted, as generally, it should be the female figure which seems to be the source of inspiration is of no significance. For, although the male figure is artistically the better, by a curious aesthetic perversion it is usual to-day to ignore it as a subject for art.

In an essay in *Circle*, as cryptic as most modern essays on aesthetics, Miss Hepworth states: "Contemporary constructive work does not lose by not having particular human interest, drama, fear, religious emotion. It moves us profoundly because it represents the whole of the artist's expression and vision, his whole sensibility to enduring ideas, his whole desire for a realization of these ideas in life and a complete rejection of the transitory and local forces of destruction." This may or may not mean that Miss Hepworth's interests are consciously solely in the qualities which I have suggested. But one may legitimately object to her classifying the other interests as non-enduring. Furthermore, while agreeing that the two kinds of interest cannot be compared and that one cannot speak of loss or gain—one must accept from the artist what he has to give, and Miss Hepworth has a lot to give—yet, thinking again of the cowherd of the Acropolis Museum, one may state that there are subjects of which the greatest art may be made, which Miss Hepworth's modern artist ignores.

This is intended in no way as blame. Indeed, the October exhibitions as a whole show how a stubborn clinging to impressionism may lead even gifted artists to a vulgarity bordering on that of the Royal Academy. The oases in this desert of commonplace vision are Miss Hepworth's exhibition and that of M. Leger at the London Gallery, in which he combines his usual sense of formal design with, particularly in his *Gouaches*, a new feeling for his material. The moral seems to be that to-day the qualities to which Miss Hepworth refers in the passage quoted, are those of which creative sculpture and painting are made.

WILLIAM GIBSON

MUSIC

THE Prague Philharmonic Orchestra gave the first of its two concerts in London on October 13th, the second is on October 29th. Rafael Kubelik, its conductor, is the son of Jan Kubelik the violinist, and at 23 promises well. He has all the airs of the conductor already, indeed he is almost too anxious that no detail, no hidden beauty of any work that he is conducting, should escape the notice of the audience. The Prague Philharmonic Orchestra is an experienced body of fine musicians, full of enthusiasm and a natural musical feeling which sometimes runs away with them. I have seldom heard any orchestra who so patently felt the music they played, had it running in their veins and dancing in their bodies.

Very properly the programme began with an Overture by Dvořák, the *Carnival* Overture, written in the summer of 1891. The programme note told me that this work "should be understood from a symbolic point of view" but I think the note must have been written by a German, for both conductor and orchestra obviously understood it, as the composer had most plainly meant it, as a charming, vivacious, full-blooded, and essentially spontaneous work, close to the earth, like all the best of Dvořák and possessed of that infectious lilt and melodic bubble and flow which makes Dvořák's the most musical of all music. *Vltava* from Smetana's *Má Vlast* has the same charming quality and it was in these two works that conductor and orchestra gave their best. It was interesting to compare these two "national works" with *Wallenstein's Camp*, Smetana's early symphonic poem, which he composed under the influence of Liszt. Here the natural Czech flow of his inspiration is channeled in the conventional Lisztian form—the incidents of Schiller's play are painstakingly "represented" in a noisy, theatrical way, the showiness that was natural and proper to Liszt copied with appalling results by the naïve countryman, who felt so deeply and expressed so naturally in music the beauties of his country but lost his spontaneity and charm the moment he deserted his natural element.

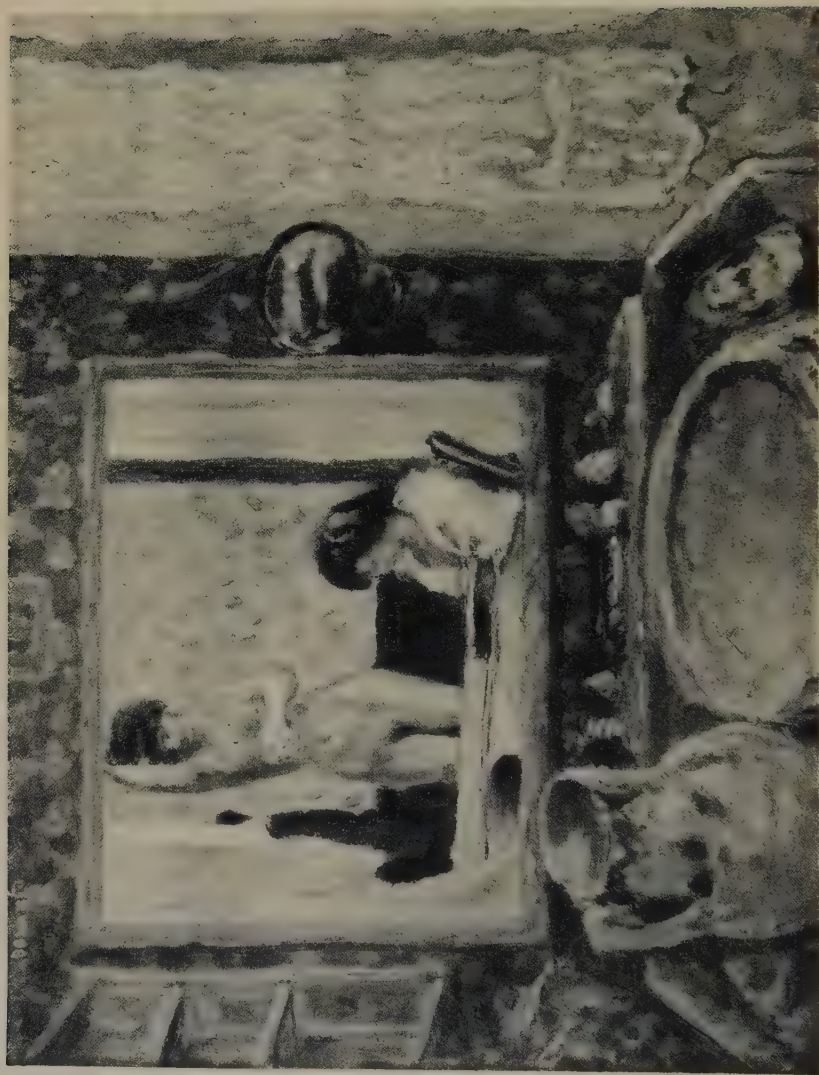
Czech music of the twentieth century was represented by Joseph Suk. *Saint Wenceslas*, the meditation on an old Czech choral written by Suk just after the outbreak of war in 1914, is both serious and beautiful without being in any way greatly distinguished. It is plainly deeply felt, the workmanship is good, but the personality of the composer does not seem strong enough to make anything really valuable of his emotions. The *Scherzo Fantastique* gave perhaps the key to Suk's weakness: for it is a charming but quite characterless little work which it would not be surprising to hear played in a restaurant. Even the serious moments of such a chameleon as the composer of these two works lose their convincing quality. Tschaikovsky's Fourth Symphony was the other work performed, and here the conductor was not up to his task. It takes a more experienced conductor all his time to avoid being caught up in the orchestral detail of any Tschaikovsky symphony, and the Fourth

particularly is constructed in short emotional bursts which it is often almost impossible to weld together into a satisfactory unity.

The first of the ninth series of Courtauld-Sargent Concerts was given on October 18th and 19th at Queen's Hall. Stravinsky's latest work, *Jeu de Cartes*, was the main attraction in the programme, and Stravinsky's own presence as conductor, ensuring an authoritative performance, made the concert an event of real musical importance. Commissioned for the American Ballet in 1936, *Jeu de Cartes* was produced at the Metropolitan Opera House on April 27th of this year, the choreography by Balanchin. The Ballet is based on a game of poker and is in three "deals." Each deal opens with the same solemn "processional" passage and then goes on to various dance episodes, which are packed with jostling reminiscences of (according to the American notes) Rossini, Delibes, Johann Strauss, Pugnî, Ravel, the composer's own *Capriccio* and "jazz in general." I cannot say honestly that I identified the shades of all these composers, but I can quite imagine that anyone entering the Queen's Hall by chance might have taken *Jeu de Cartes* for part of a B.B.C. programme entitled "Ballet music of the last 200 years," arranged into a continuous work by an arranger of genius. The workmanship was, of course, perfect; there is no nuance of charm, mockery, or solemn frivolity that Stravinsky cannot produce to perfection. The music was often pretty (the reminiscences of Rossini, Delibes, and Johann Strauss would guarantee that) and always pointed and apt, with the Ballet it would be a good *divertimento* of the eighteenth-century kind.

But that the composer of *Petrushka* and the *Sacre* should have devoted his enormous gifts to the production of this solemn fooling is to me, at any rate, a tragedy. Stravinsky fiddles while Rome burns, and it is interesting to see, in the *Chroniques de ma Vie*, how increasing seriousness and reflection on the nature of music has, in his development, gone with an increasing tendency to write pastiche and consciously "made" music. Composers are not as a rule intellectual creatures, and with Stravinsky's example before us, we may perhaps be thankful that they are not. In him, as in too many modern intellectuals, thought seems to have dried up the springs of the heart; he has become all head and his music seems to have been excogitated on a kind of mental pianola. The rest of the programme was devoted to Beethoven's First and Schubert's Seventh Symphonies, conducted by Malcolm Sargent. The most extraordinary thing about Beethoven's First Symphony is that it is as unmistakably by Beethoven as the Ninth; there is no trace of undigested Mozart or Haydn. Composed when Beethoven was 25, it is vigorous, bright with already that dramatic emphasis and something of the authority which came to their first maturity in the *Eroica*. Dr. Sargent conducted accurately, but without any inspiration. The *divines longueurs* of Schubert's Seventh Symphony have just the quality lacking in Stravinsky—the unceasing invention and the persuasive charm which compel attention and, like Dvořák, put the listener into communication with a world of natural and unstudied beauty which stir and delight both the mind and the senses.

MARTIN COOPER



JEU DE GLACE

by PIERRE BONNARD

in the exhibition of Bonnard and Vuillard at Messrs. Rosenberg and Helft's Galleries

FILMS

THE PEARLS OF THE CROWN. *French.*

KNIGHT WITHOUT ARMOUR. *British.*

CHILDREN AT SCHOOL. *British.*

WHEN Sacha Guitry made *Le Roman d'un Tricheur*—shown last winter by the Film Society and this autumn at the Academy in London—it was welcomed as a new experiment in narrative technique. Guitry played an elderly man whose shady career was unfolded in a series of silent episodes described and linked up with the aid of a commentary spoken by himself. Now, in *The Pearls of the Crown*, he has applied a rather similar technique to a still longer and more complicated story running through four centuries. It follows the mythical history of a set of pearls in the British royal crown, first assembled by Pope Clement VII as a necklace for his niece, Catherine de Medici. There are three present-day commentators—an English equerry, a papal courtier, and an indeterminate Frenchman, played by Guitry, who appears also in the historical episodes as Francis I, Barras, and Napoleon III. This time, however, there is also dialogue throughout, in French, English, and Italian. The old Pope sends his nephew to hunt for pearls in Abyssinia; Catherine, as a child, comes running through a convent garden; Henry VIII is painted by Holbein; Mary Queen of Scots goes to the scaffold; Madame Dubarry's negro page takes his revenge when the mob arrives in 1789; young General Bonaparte courts Josephine; a stout American with a cigar gives one of the missing pearls to a French lady on board the *Normandie*.

It is an extraordinary mixture of past and present, fact and fantasy, of good acting (Pope Clement) and bad acting (Queen Elizabeth), and it all amounts to—what? Guitry is enterprising; he wants to try out all the tricky resources of the screen. But he has the imagination of a dramatist and a story-teller, I think, not the visual imagination of a film producer. He likes the cinema because it enables him to string together all sorts of anecdotes and amusing incidents scattered through time and space. It is a new freedom for him, after years of work in the theatre. But there is no point in darting here and there with your camera if all you do, wherever you arrive, is to photograph an acted scene. The power of the cinema lies, not in its omnivorous appetite, but in the opportunity it gives for breaking up the world of time and space into fragments and transmuting them into a kind of poetry by building them up again into a new pattern of sights and sounds.

This is an art very well understood by Jacques Feyder, director of *Knight Without Armour*, but it is an art which even the most gifted film director finds it hard to practise when he is working within the limitations of the star system on the one hand and the conventions of popular narrative on the other. *Knight Without Armour*, produced by Alexander Korda at Denham, features Marlene Dietrich and Robert Donat in a story about the Soviet

revolution, adapted from the novel by James Hilton. Donat is a young Englishman who works in Tsarist Russia for the British Secret Service, posing as a revolutionary student, and is exiled to Siberia for his supposed complicity in a bomb outrage. After the revolution he becomes an assistant commissar and rescues the beautiful young Countess Alexandra from the mob which invades her country estate. This early part of the film is vivid and varied, but something goes wrong later on, when Donat and Marlene Dietrich are engaged in a long adventure of pursuits and escapes as they try to reach safety through the surge of civil war. Their wanderings are the whole story, a story which must have one of two endings—either they will escape or not. In this kind of picture it is safe to wager heavily that they will escape, so there is not much to keep the dramatic tension stretched, particularly as they fall in love with each other at an early stage and nothing emotional occurs to disturb their romance. The plot needs some other element of conflict or uncertainty: after the early sequences it runs ahead in a single straight line, and the pattern of drama is always a broken pattern, with gaps and interruptions as one line of development clashes with another. However, Feyder's touch is often evident in the film's pictorial qualities, the Russian landscape confused with civil war, the roving bands of soldiers in the woods, the deserted corridors of the country house; and the interlude of the mad station-master, who with rigorous punctuality dispatches imaginary trains when there are no trains running, is one of many brilliant fragments, scattered here and there. Donat, acting with his usual accomplished ease, makes the Englishman a pleasant, credible young fellow, and there is an excellent performance by John Clements as a young Soviet official who befriends the escaping pair. But the refinement of Marlene Dietrich, since the days of *The Blue Angel*, has now gone so far that she is hardly more than a very elegant wraith blown through the story on a waft of chiffon drapery.

The Gas Light and Coke Company makes films to advertise gas; also it has the unusual habit of making every year one documentary film on a general social theme with no reference to gas. A year ago this admirable policy gave us a striking film about nutrition and poverty; now the Company has sponsored *Children at School*, produced by John Grierson and directed by Basil Wright. In this country there are a thousand State schools on the Government's black list, scheduled eventually for demolition; many more are grim old nineteenth-century buildings, poorly lit and badly warmed. The film starts with delightful pictures of a few modern schools, sunny and airy, and draws a contrast between them and the others. There is a commentary spoken by Mr. Wilson Harris, editor of *The Spectator*, interspersed with fragments of dialogue by anonymous teachers engaged in their daily work. It is a well-mannered film, quiet in style and almost too sweetly reasonable for its subject. But it gets clearly home a number of facts which need publicity; let us be grateful that a disinterested business has taken on the job of showing them to thousands of people who might otherwise never hear of them.

CHARLES DAVY

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

NOT many members of the general public, I suppose, could say off-hand what sort of thing the subscription books of a diocese might be. They are, primarily, the volumes in which the clergy of the diocese upon appointment declare their adhesion, or in one word *subscribe*, to the thirty-nine articles. From this one might suppose that there would be a certain sameness and dullness about them as a topic of discussion; but Mr. G. H. Carter, in his recently published *The Norwich Subscription Books* (Nelson, one guinea), which he believes to be the first attempt to describe and analyse any group of such books, shows that they contain a great deal of varied information and are of considerable value as sources of social history. The first twenty-nine books of the Norwich diocese, here dealt with, cover the period from 1637 to 1800, and Mr. Carter reveals their value, not only as the main record of parish incumbents, but as sources for the history of education and medicine, besides much purely local history. The State demanded religious conformity not only from parsons, but from teachers and doctors also; and so these books come to contain a mass of most interesting facts about the status of teachers, the grammar schools, the rise of elementary and charity education, the location of doctors, their specialization and the foreign influx into their ranks. On the last point, Mr. Carter records that the majority of the medical profession were non-graduates and probably as a rule natives of the places in which they practised, but that (besides Irishmen and Scots) there was an appreciable invasion of Dutch, German, and French doctors. Between 1662 and 1735 he notes more than twenty obviously foreign names.

* * *

The Annual Report of the Friends of the National Libraries (c/o The British Museum, W.C.1.) was presented to members at a meeting on October 15th. It shows that the excellent work of helping to acquire rare books and manuscripts for appropriate public libraries has again been carried out with discrimination and knowledge—though obviously much more could be done if larger funds were available, and an increase in membership should surely be possible, in view of the vast numbers of people who make use of the great national libraries (the attendance in the British Museum reading-room alone, during 1936, was 255,361). The members of the F.N.L. now number 623 (a fall of sixteen compared with the previous year) and I write these words in the hope that they may prick the consciences of a certain number of persons who could well afford to subscribe an annual guinea to so useful a cause. Gifts have been made to twenty-three libraries by the society during the year, the chief event undoubtedly being the completion of the purchase of the archives of T. H. Huxley for the Imperial College of Science, an object to which the Friends were able to contribute more than £470. The British Museum, the libraries of Durham Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, and the Victoria and Albert Museum are other institu-

tions to which important gifts have been made. Since the foundation of the Society some six years ago, the honorary secretary has been Mr. H. D. Ziman, who has done remarkable work on its behalf. He has now retired, though he remains a member of the committee, and has been succeeded by Mr. Oliver Bell.

* * *

By the time these words appear in print the new book-auction season will have begun. Hodgson's will have held a miscellaneous sale on October 20th and the two following days, and Christie's will have held a three-day sale, on the premises, of "the residue of the celebrated library at Clumber"—the residue being those books (amounting to several thousand) not selected for sale in London by Sotheby's, who are to hold a second section of their sale of books from Clumber before the end of the year. Sotheby's first book sale of the season is to take place on November 1st and 2nd, and will include a few books (amongst them a number of Vale Press publications) from the library of the late Charles Shannon, R.A. And this is perhaps the most convenient point at which to acknowledge the receipt of the third part of volume 34 of *Book-Auction Records*, published by Messrs. Henry Stevens, Son and Stiles (quarterly, £1 10s. *per annum*). It deals with the results of the sales of last April, May, and June, including those of the first part of the Clumber library, just mentioned. In all nearly four thousand items are listed.

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From the New York Public Library I have received Mr. George L. McKay's *American Book Auction Catalogues 1713-1934: a Union List*, for which Mr. C. S. Brigham has written an introduction (\$3.50). This valuable compilation runs to more than five hundred pages of small type in double columns, and lists more than ten thousand items. The arrangement is chronological, and there are an index of owners and an alphabetical list of auction-houses. Mr. Brigham's introduction deals with the history of book-auction in America, and gives a good deal of information about notable American auctioneers both past and present. Except for two possible New York sales in the seventeenth century, the earliest known auction of books took place in America on May 28th, 1713, and there were four more in 1716; but the first of which a catalogue survives was that of the books of divinity, history, poetry, and so forth of the Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton, sold on July 2, 1717. All these sales took place in Boston, but in 1722 there is an auction at Charlestown, Mass., in 1732, one at New York, in 1734, one at Charleston, S.C., and in 1738 one at Portsmouth, N.H. Philadelphia appears in 1744, or, more certainly, in 1745. To show the growth of the business, I may mention that the whole of the eighteenth-century sales occupy only 25 pages, those of the nineteenth century about 190 pages, and those of the first thirty-four years of the present century, 240 pages.

I. A. WILLIAMS

BOOK PRODUCTION NOTES

THE GUTENBERG ANNUAL, 1937

NO praise can be too high for the work of research got together by the Gutenberg-Gesellschaft of Mainz and published in its *Jahrbuch*, now in its twelfth issue. Its outlook is by no means confined to the history and development of printing in the country of its origin; for instance, there are articles in Italian, French, and English, on vellum books from Italy, illustrated books from France, and the spread of printing in Esthonia, the Philippines, and Canada. Professor Zedler writes on the technique of the making and printing of the initial letters in the great Mainz Psalter of 1457, which Douglas C. McMurtrie rightly calls "one of the greatest books ever printed. . . ." Amongst the treasures of the Douce collection at the Bodleian is a *Canon Missae* printed from the same type as the Psalter and with some of the same decorated initial letters. On these grounds it is ascribed to about the year 1458. Zedler, who discusses the special features of this *Canon* and also the evidence it affords for the methods by which such fine and elaborate work as the initials was reproduced and printed, uses both Psalter and Canon in support of his theory that from the beginning Gutenberg had it in mind to print a missal which by the beauty of its printing and decoration should rival and supplant the richly illuminated and decorated missals of his day. Dr. Ruppel shows reason for believing that the epitaph to Gutenberg, "ARTIS IMPRESSORIE REPERTORI DE OMNI NATIONE ET LINGUA OPTIME MERITO," found in a "Festschrift" published in 1499 to commemorate the centenary of Heidelberg University, and looked upon by some as a merely literary tribute, was in fact copied from the hatchment put over Gutenberg's tomb in the Franciscan church at Mainz. If so, its description of him as the inventor of printing would date back to his death, which is shown by Dr. Ruppel to have taken place between January 1465 and February 1468.

THE PRINTERS' "CHAPEL" IN THE XVII CENTURY

AN article in the *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, written in French by Maurice Sabbe, throws light on a venerable institution which still flourishes, I hope, in every English printing office. Most of my readers doubtless know that the journeyman compositors and printers have their own club for discussion and for regulating the conduct of its members inside the office. That body is called the "Chapel," and its members, known as the "'Ship," which is short for "companionship," elect one of themselves as their "Father." Amongst the archives of the Plantin Press are the regulations of its "Chapel," called by that very name; and the [companion-]"Ship" figures therein as "les compagnons." The "Father" was known as the "Prince" or "Captain." The rules give an instructive and amusing insight into the ways of a seventeenth-century office. Those regarding the provision and consumption of beer might find approval even in this more temperate age.

B. H. NEWDIGATE

NEW LITERATURE

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S CONTEMPORARIES

By the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, O.M.

(Warden of New College, Oxford)

GREAT CONTEMPORARIES. By the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, C.H., M.P. *Thornton Butterworth*, 21s.

The engaging qualities of heart and head which have secured so many friends and admirers for Mr. Churchill are fully and happily displayed in the volume of essays on "Great Contemporaries" which has just been issued from the press. Though each essay, as Mr. Churchill observes, is self-contained, they constitute in their entirety a valuable commentary upon the times through which we have lived. We have estimates of the ex-Kaiser and of King George V; of King Alfonso of Spain, of Hindenburg and Hitler; and Foch and Clemenceau, the one a representative of the royalist and clerical, the other of the revolutionary and the secularist half of France; of generals like Foch and Haig, of Savinkov, the Russian nihilist, who became Minister of War under the Kerensky government, and afterwards threw himself into the campaign against Lenin; of Lawrence of Arabia and Leon Trotsky, and of eight leading figures in English political life.

It is a delightful volume, full of eloquence and fun, of warm human sympathy and lively diatribe, and characterized by the powerful grip of essential fact, wide range of experience, imagination, and vocabulary which give to Mr. Churchill's historical writings unusual distinction. What makes this book a specially helpful contribution is that Mr. Churchill is able to contribute to almost every portrait some ray of light from his own personal experience, and that in every case the mature judgment of a statesman, who, however controversial his views may be, always writes from a full and powerful

mind, is brought to bear upon the political occasions which pass under his review. He notes, for instance, how greatly the career of Rosebery was hampered by the fact that he had no experience of the House of Commons, and how Curzon's comparative failure in the popular chamber was an indication of those deficiencies which ultimately helped to tell against him in the race for the highest political honours. In an interesting passage, which may bear fruit at some future date, he expresses his surprise that Mr. Asquith did not, in the crisis of the 1916 winter, evoke the expedient of a secret session and seek the succour of the House of Commons.

There [writes Mr. Churchill] is the final citadel of a Prime Minister in distress. No one can deny him his right in peace or war to appeal from the intrigues of Cabinets, caucuses, clubs, and newspapers to that great assembly, and take his dismissal only at their hands. Yet the Liberal Government which fell in 1915, the Asquith Coalition which fell in 1916, the Lloyd George Coalition which fell in 1922—all were overthrown by secret, obscure, internal processes of which the public only know the main story. I am of opinion that in every one of these cases the result of confident resort to Parliament would have been the victory of the Prime Minister of the day.

This is a view with which, I imagine, most House of Commons men would concur, though it is open to doubt whether such a precedent, if once set, would be helpful. Mr. Churchill also tells us for the first time the full story of the circumstances which led to the King's sending for Mr. Baldwin rather than for Lord Curzon upon the resignation of Mr. Bonar Law. Lord Balfour was the dominant factor.

Arrived at the Palace, he expressed with conviction the view that in these days a Prime Minister must be in the House of Commons. He confined himself strictly to this point. He was careful to use no other argument. It was enough. When late that night Balfour returned to his sick-bed at Sheringham after his fatiguing journey, he was asked by some of his most cherished friends who were staying with him, "And will dear George be chosen?" "No," he replied placidly, "dear George will not."

In giving this advice to his sovereign, Lord Balfour was, as he told me, principally impressed by the fact that His Majesty's Opposition in the House of Commons had by that time become, and was likely for some time to remain, the Labour Party.

Though Mr. Churchill has more than once changed his political allegiance, he has never been disloyal to a friend. Some of his most attractive portraits are those of men from whom he was at one time or another politically estranged. That, of course, is the honourable tradition of English public life, prettily illustrated by the story of Mr. Churchill's last important conversation with "Joe" Chamberlain, from whom he had asked for copies of letters which might help him in the composition of Lord Randolph Churchill's life. "We were at that time in full political battle, and although I was of small consequence I had attacked him with all the ferocity of youth, face to face in Parliament and throughout the country." Nevertheless "Joe" invited him for a night to Highbury.

We sat up until two. "Joe" produced diaries, letters, and memoranda of the 80's, and as each fragment revived memories of those bygone days, he spoke with an animation, sympathy and charm which delighted me.

Another elder statesman whose portrait is painted with affection and respect is John Morley, and who that has shared with Mr. Churchill the privilege of Morley's friendship will dissent from this tribute?

His manner and aspect were captivating. His art in private was to understand the opposite point of view, and to treat it with so much sympathy and good humour, while adhering to his own, that the hearers were often led to believe themselves in agreement with him, or at any rate that the remaining differences were small and not final. This sometimes led to disappointment for Morley, though in conversation he paraded and manœuvred nimbly round his own convictions, offering his salutations and the gay compliments of old-time war to the other side, always returned to his fortified camp to sleep.

In these days of rapid change and fluid allegiance fortified camps are less common than of old. Here again is the real Arthur Balfour:

He had that composed, detached, uplifted mental and moral vision combined with the art of dexterous and practical management requisite for those who guide the course of permanent societies. To the defence of his principles and prejudices he summoned every resource of conduct, oratory, and dialectic. But he knew when to change, and not only when to change, but how to change, in accordance with the pressures of events. Holding to his own convictions, steering always by the same stars, diverging only so far as was inevitable under the thrust of adverse winds, he moved with the times, and lived in the forefront of nearly three generations. He was never stranded; he was never out-of-date.

This could hardly be improved on, nor yet the short and pungent passage describing Balfour's part in the fatal Cabinet convulsions which resulted in the substitution of Lloyd George for Asquith in the crisis of December 1916:

He passed from one Cabinet to the other, from the Prime Minister who was his champion to the Prime Minister who had been his most severe critic, like a powerful graceful cat walking delicately and unsoiled across a rather muddy street.

The "powerful cat" was at the time in bed with influenza.

It is perhaps natural that for a man of Mr. Churchill's romantic temperament the extraordinary figure of Lawrence of Arabia should have possessed an overpowering attraction. No portrait in this distinguished gallery glows with richer colours, so rich that one is almost provoked to ask whether the Seven Pillars is really so flawless a narrative, whether it may not be a little overwritten and lacking in clarity, and whether the quality of Lawrence's statesmanship was really as high as we are given to understand. I confess it gives me some surprise to read of "the precision" of Lawrence's opinions, having from some small experience of that great man in council come to the conclusion that he was apt to be wayward and paradoxical, and that it was difficult to get steady direction from him. No doubt, however, Mr. Churchill knows best.

A diverting sketch of Bernard Shaw, very handsomely (seeing that Mr. Churchill dissents from the whole trend of the Shavian philosophy) described as "the greatest living master of letters in the English-speaking world," gives occasion for a brisk attack upon that old enemy the Bolshevik. The passage describing the pilgrimage which the great Jester paid to Moscow in the company of Lady Astor is a good example of Mr. Churchill's vivacious chaff:

It must have been with some trepidation that the chiefs of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics awaited the arrival in their grim domains of a merry harlequinade. The Russians have always been fond of circuses and travelling shows. Since they had imprisoned, shot or starved most of their best comedians, their visitors might fill for a space a noticeable void. And here was the world's most intellectual Clown and Pantaloon in one, and the charming Columbine of the capitalist pantomime. So the crowds were marshalled. Multitudes of well-drilled demonstrators were served out with their red scarves and flags. The massed bands blared. Loud cheers from sturdy proletarians rent the welkin. The nationalized railways produced their best accommodation. Com-

missar Lunacharsky delivered a flowery harangue. Commissar Litvinoff, unmindful of the food queues in the back streets, prepared a sumptuous banquet, and Arch Commissar Stalin, "the man of steel," flung open the closely guarded sanctuaries of the Kremlin, and pushing aside his morning's budget of death warrants and "lettres de cachet," received his guests with smiles of overflowing comradeship.

The epigrams, too, are in the best parliamentary manner: of Rosebery, "He would not stoop; he did not conquer"; of the ex-Kaiser, "If you are the summit of a volcano, the least you can do is to smoke"; of "Joe" Chamberlain, "He carried into the crowded streets, clacking factories and slums of Birmingham those same loyalties which it was believed thrived only in the Highland Glens"; of George Curzon, "He thought too much about stating his case and too little about getting things done."

The time has not come for a final verdict upon the figures which stand out in such living colours in Mr. Churchill's gallery. Even the most finished of his sketches—and the sketches differ in finish—does not profess to tell the whole tale. Mr. Churchill writes down his impressions, and in the cases (fifteen out of twenty-one) where the present writer has some personal first-hand knowledge of his own with which to test Mr. Churchill's estimate the impressions seem to be remarkably fair and just. The volume closes with a fine and altogether deserving tribute to King George V, and recounts, though in the barest outline, the instances in which the personal action of the King was of constitutional importance. Here no doubt the future historian will have something to add, as, for instance, the part played by Sir Herbert Samuel in the crisis of 1931, which led to the formation of the first National Government. But these additions will be of trifling importance. If we can say anything with certainty about the future, it is that Mr. Churchill's estimate of King George V will stand the test of time.

MR. YEATS'S METAPHYSICAL MAN

By Seán O'Faoláin

VISION. By W. B. Yeats. *Macmillan*. 15s.

Mr. Yeats is daring; or, perhaps, arrogant. He has written a Sibylline book that I could easily imagine falling into this cynical, fragmentary, analytical age like a lark into a lime-kiln; as I can imagine it being read equally with pleasure and disgust, fascination and rage, seized on with glee by a *Night and Day*, trumpeted by a *Hibbert Journal*. And yet, what more analytical book has ever been written—unless, of another kind, the *Anatomy of Melancholy*? What more impersonal, aloof book? In this time of a return to the seventeenth-century poets (or have the Reds finished all that?) what more topical, of-the-period, classification of the contraries and opposites, the harmonious discords, in life and thought and the nature of man? If he had not been forced by his nature and his literary ancestry to wrap it up in a romantic fable of Michael Robartes, which will discourage many, if, that is, he could have written it in the crisp fashion of our day, I could imagine it echoing for a long time among the cognoscenti. Even yet it may—with whatever derision for its folly mingled with delight in its ripeness and wisdom.

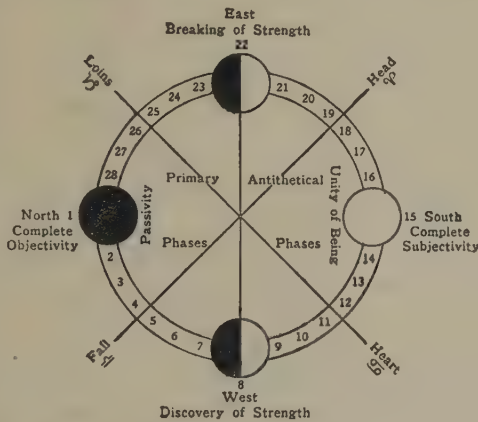
For years now Yeats has worked towards this book, teasing out his ideas about the contrast between fluid personality and static character, elaborating his fascination at the antinomies in man until he has, at last, in this book, come to “a classification of every possible movement of life and thought.” For this vast classification he uses a symbolism of interlocked, gyring

cones, whose contraction and expansion bring the faculties of man into relationship with one another; to this he adds the symbolism of the waxing and waning moon to indicate the development of character, and its consolidation at given stages into certain typical conditions commonly found in life. The possible combinations of four faculties and twenty-eight phases are obviously immense.

The faculties are four—*Will*, or selfhood; *Creative Mind*, or thought; *Body of Fate*, or the thing we know, such as environment; and *Mask*, which is the desired or chosen Destiny, the Ought as against the Is, the object of the will, or that (to borrow from Hindu philosophy, of which much of this Yeatsian metaphysic is evidently a development) towards which the Kharma moves, or

is moved by will or desire, or chance, or fate.

Every man, proceeds the metaphysician, has these faculties in a special quality according as he is an Objective, Primary man, or a Subjective, Antithetical man. They are rarely in alignment or in harmony; for out of conflict comes the condition of life. Starting from complete objectivity, the progress is from character—the imposed unity, mob- and environment-formed—to self-won, or fate-given personality, a condition of fire; and thence back towards social character again. The illustration of all this by types, forms the most interesting part of the book, and must excite the brain of every pious reader. As we enter the *Antithetical* section of the Great Wheel, we thus come on the Image



Burner (Savonarola), the Forerunner (Nietzsche)—the first type capable of Unity of Being—Sensuous Ego (Baudelaire); the Obsessed Man (Keats); the Positive Man (Blake or Rabelais); until social character begins to dominate again with the intense but disillusioned Emotional Man (Arnold) and the Concrete Man (Shakespeare); we pass on with Wells, Shaw, George Moore—Acquisitive Men—through men like AE, dependent on local conditions, obsessed by social conscience, and not capable of personal expression, to the Saint (Socrates) and the Fools of Shakespeare. It is all shrewd and persuasive though too many types are taken from men of letters. And when I begin to test with, say, Tchekov or O'Connell, I got an uncomfortable feeling that it was like the fortune-teller's "dark man" and "fair man" which inveigles only the predisposed.

There is no ethic, no morality. The actor and the play are one. The drama is inclusive and illuminating—as absolute as a poem; a poem—however prosy with tables and numbers—whose subject is the

oldest subject in the world—the nature of man in relation to his human destiny. With such a subject and such a poet, I cannot (once the pseudo-romantic trappings have been flicked away) imagine anybody from an assayer to a tea-taster, a Communist to a pious Roman Catholic, who will not find it an exasperating, provoking, stimulating delight.

It is the Yeats who loved Blake and Shelley, who detested Sargent and admired Whistler, who wished he could prefer Chaucer to Shakespeare, who disliked the Flemish satirists, who has always been seeking a unifying image and bewails the falling asunder of life before the fraying of the intellect; it is the Yeats of the personal, fiery poems, the dramatic, hammering, and hammered poems of the middle and later period; and nobody who would read these poems in mood with the poet, extract from them the ultimate pleasure of their implications and overtones, can afford not to wind his way, with this book, into their cavern-sources in one of the most complex and solitary minds among lyric poets since the death of Keats.

THE GOVERNING CLASS

By Raymond Mortimer

MOMENTS OF MEMORY. By Herbert Asquith. *Hutchinson*. 18s.

Mr. Herbert Asquith's *Reminiscences* are likely to attract a considerable public, for his style is both fluent and scholarly, and the circumstances of his life have been such as to give him many moments worth remembering. Through his father, his stepmother and his wife—a daughter of Lord Wemyss—he has lived always with the most intelligent members of the governing class, and he has obviously inherited some of his father's most admirable qualities. In his book he touches inevitably upon many controversial subjects, but he never allows himself a violent or vindictive expression. The fault indeed of these reminiscences is that they are altogether too gentlemanly; the author is too care-

ful when talking of others, too modest when talking of himself. We are left with only a negative image of his character—all we can gather is that he is the opposite of a fool, of a cad, and of a coward. It is impossible not to wish that he had caught from Lady Oxford a little of her grand outspokenness.

The early chapters give some delightful glimpses of the author's parents, his charming, unworldly mother, his humorous, imperturbable, enormously good-natured father. We see the future Prime Minister sailing, riding, playing cricket, chess, and billiards, reading French novels. Mr. Gladstone appears, and does not masticate his food any more thoroughly than other people. Mr. Birrell breaks a bat, when playing in an eleven of authors,

and gives a victorious shout to the Pavilion: "Bring me some more bats!" There is a butler, who as always in an Asquith house is an Admirable Crichton and a valued friend. The author has a fight at his prep. school, catches butterflies at Winchester, is elected President of the Oxford Union. He makes friends with D. H. Lawrence, of whom he gives an excellent description. Then the golden days suddenly end; and the second half of the book is chiefly taken up with restrained but terrible pictures of trench-life in Flanders and Northern France.

Two outbursts had already foreshadowed the violence and intolerance which exploded in 1914 and which have now become regular in half Europe. The Suffragettes and the Tories introduced into English politics methods which had for seventy auspicious years almost disappeared. Mr. F. E. Smith and Lord Hugh Cecil (the name of the latter is too considerably omitted in Mr. Herbert Asquith's account of the incident) howled insults at the Prime Minister for hours, seeking to discredit the House of Commons. Mr. Bonar Law inaugurated with his anti-Parliamentary speeches on Home Rule a political career which reached its apex in December 1916, when he so unaccountably forgot to show Mr. Asquith the Resolution which he had been deputed by the Unionist Ministers to convey. The more one reads about the late Lord Oxford, the more one admires the magnanimity of the man and the sagacity of the statesman. But he was so unlucky as to live into an age when self-advertisement became more important than sagacity. If he had been our principal representative at Versailles, it is possible that we should not to-day be living on the brink of a volcano.

Two further reflections are likely to strike the reader of these reminiscences. First one looks with admiring envy at the names in Mr. Asquith's cabinets—intellectuals like Haldane, Morley, Masterman, Bryce, Birrell, rockets like Churchill and Lloyd George. (Both Front Benches to-day are by comparison a little, shall

we say, unglittering.) And then one must pay homage to the culture and good sense which still enabled Ministers and their opponents to be intimate friends—an aristocratic tradition which nearly succumbed in the years immediately preceding the war, and which has now almost entirely disappeared. The social neglect of the Opposition by Ministers, high officials, and foreign diplomats is deplorably unwise, and the fact that the Opposition themselves often encourage this neglect is similarly short-sighted.

Mr. Herbert Asquith does not find one moment in which to remember a painter or a musician. This probably is due to his own lack of interest in the arts other than literature, but it is also characteristic of the pre-war governing class. Politically the Asquith set was alert to the future, but their culture was curiously conservative and unaesthetic. There was not one among them, I think, except Sir Edward Marsh, who knew that men were painting in Paris. The difference in this respect between Mr. Herbert Asquith and Lord Oxford's two youngest children is typical of the two generations to which they respectively belong.

Only once, I think, does our author show indefensible bias, and that is on the subject of female suffrage. "It is certainly not a common experience," he writes, "to see a woman in despair because she has forgotten to exercise her new and precious privilege." But election figures suggest that it is not common either to see a man in similar despair. It should not be necessary to remind a Liberal that the value of the suffrage depends not upon its being used but upon politicians knowing that it can be used.

Mr. Herbert Asquith's critical accounts of the Cabinet crisis of 1916 and of the Battle of Passchendaele are valuable. But what we remember most gratefully in his book are the charming pictures of his father and of Lawrence, and some of the war-landscapes in which he has succeeded in blending with horror a certain awful beauty.

NEW LITERATURE

EMILY DICKINSON

By Evelyn Underhill

THE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON.

Edited by Martha Dickinson and Alfred Leete Hampson. *Cape*. 12s. 6d.

The strange condensed poetry of Emily Dickinson—unknown to the world in her lifetime and only gradually disclosed after her death—is at last, in this stout enthusiastic volume, given to us in a complete form. Entirely at variance with the spirit of the age in which she lived, and from which she successfully hid herself for the greater part of her life, it has now achieved a great position in modern American literature. Though it is hard to follow those critics who regard her as “with the possible exception of Sappho, the greatest woman poet of all time,” the admiration which she now receives is certainly justified and perhaps may even increase. This is due in part to the individual and non-derivative character of her poetry; but also, and very largely to a technique which anticipated the methods of modern verse, in its struggle to express with the utmost economy of means great truths vividly realized. No contrast could be greater than that between the stark intensity of these brief poems and quatrains and the easy fluidity and tuneful moralizings of her contemporary Longfellow; for Emily Dickinson’s revolt from elegance, sugary spirituality, and amiable platitudes was complete. She deliberately stepped out of the stream of nineteenth-century tradition; she saw with her own eyes, heard with her own ears, and expressed—often with what difficulty!—a little of that which she perceived. The result, which is on one hand stimulating, on the other witnesses to the extent in which every artist must depend on his artistic environment, and how high a price he pays for his repudiation of it.

She was, say her editors, more interested in what she had to say than in the way she said it. Unluckily this attitude, so respectable in itself, sometimes means that the

poet does not succeed in expressing that which she has to say:

I saw no way, the Heavens were stitched,
I felt the columns close;
The Earth reversed her hemispheres,
I touched the Universe

And back it slid—and I alone,
A speck upon a ball,
Went out upon Circumference—
Beyond the dip of bell!

This somewhat extreme example perhaps may serve to indicate how greatly Emily Dickinson’s sense of the depth and mystery of life exceeded her powers of expression; and that which really makes her work so impressive is the clear evidence of a constant struggle to give form to an intuition of reality which in its very nature frequently exceeds the resources of rhythm and speech. Sometimes, it is true, she achieves a phrase of singular perfection:

Death but our rapt attention
To immortality.

But though the raw material of creation is abundantly present in her poetry, often it has not emerged from the embryonic form; its significance and beauty is so tightly packed within it that only the trained and disciplined reader is likely to realize all that he is being given:

Time feels so vast
That were it not for an Eternity,
I fear me this Circumference
Engross my Finitude

To His exclusion,
Who prepares by rudiments of size
For the stupendous volume
Of His Diameters.

Her work has sometimes been compared with that of Blake; and it is true that the construction of her lyrics, her taste for epigram, her preoccupation with eternity, occasionally remind us of him. But the

comparison is not fair to the greater poet. Blake gives to those who study him most deeply a sense of independent and impersonal vision. It is because of this vision that he is often a relentless critic of human life. Emily Dickinson, too, often shows her sense of the contrast, the tension between two worlds. But with her the subjective note is never wholly absent; nor perhaps could we expect it to be, when we consider the circumstances in which her talent developed. A passionate attraction to a married man inevitably ended in renunciation. After this, she gradually withdrew into an almost complete retirement; her one absorbing interest being the writing of poetry which, however, she refused to publish. Once a year she emerged, to act as a hostess at a large party given by her father. Otherwise she remained hidden for weeks at a time in the house, seeing a few relatives and close friends; and never went beyond the grounds. The range of sensory stimulus to which she was accessible, and especially her first-hand contact with

nature was, therefore, strictly limited; and this fact is reflected in the subject-matter of her poems. Flowers and gardens, birds and bees, are her chief sources of natural inspiration; but on the whole her most characteristic pieces are those that point beyond the physical world and its limitations, and are concerned with her deepest preoccupations—Death and Freedom, Time and Eternity. It is, I think, too much to call her a mystical poet; but she is, most assuredly, a poet of escape, a “passenger of infinity” constantly reaching out from the solitary life of a comfortable hermitage—deliberately chosen and maintained—to the Eternity which is always the object of the hermit’s desire.

I never hear the word “escape”
Without a quicker blood,
A sudden expectation,
A flying attitude.

I never hear of prisons broad
By soldiers battered down,
But I try childish at my bars,—
Only to fail again!

JAMES HANLEY’S LIFE

By V. S. Pritchett

BROKEN WATER. By James Hanley.
Chatto and Windus. 10s. 6d.

In England a taste for literature is a very rare thing among those without some sort of educated or professional acquaintance with the subject and those who have the taste reveal it with an eagerness subdued by shyness and guilt. A commercial traveller may confess to his Russian novelists, a works foreman to his Boswell, a clerk to his Milton, a cabinet maker—I knew one—to his *Anatomy of Melancholy*; they live suspect but tolerated among their fellow creatures. Among sailors this kind of literariness is commoner and while Mr. Hanley, when he went to sea as a boy, was a bit exceptional in taking Addison, Steele, and Cervantes with him, he was not entirely without approval. When he told the bos’n that he wanted to be an author he at least did not get his

head knocked off. Many a ship’s officer before and after Conrad has had a manuscript in his drawer.

One of the points of interest in Mr. Hanley’s autobiography is that it reveals the source of that literariness which comes so unexpectedly into his most realistic passages, muddling them sometimes and yet giving them a peculiar reminiscent force. This book is free of them, but is not less forceful. One wonders if they have gone for good, if he has dug that stuff up by the roots and thrown it out. Here his narrative flows freely and is admirably unself-conscious. He has caught the eagerness and shyness of boyhood and youth to perfection and has confined himself to a subject which, in the present rage for confession among writers, is not often attempted nowadays: to the hopes and misgivings of the ambitious life. Among

the tough writers of to-day there is a romantic pretence that getting drunk, sloshing the bos'n in the jaw, and spending gaudy nights at the brothel are their only concerns; when all the time they are hiding the shameful secret that they are really preoccupied with "getting on." Mr. Hanley reverts to a simpler, more honest, and earlier tradition. The picture has an unforced verisimilitude. The mother fears that her son will suddenly develop the family passion for the sea. The father, a sailor, advises dryly against the passion. The boy gets it. There is the first ship with its hard-worked crew, its drunk cook who dies the first night out, the steward who goes overboard in a storm when pursuing a chicken, the ugly nightmare of the boy's attempted rescue. The boy has had his grey, utterly unromantic introduction to his dream. The sea becomes the dour dirty domesticity of ships. Holystone the decks, bring the bos'n's tea, learn your job, get busy—the orders fly about. Never again, he says, when he gets home after the first voyage, but he is signing on before a few days have passed.

Mr. Hanley has kept to three or four

major episodes. In the war he was carrying troops to Salonika and Gallipoli. The soldiers are the dumb cattle of Mr. Stanley Spencer's pictures. The crew quietly, philosophically rob them. What's the use of money to chaps going out *there*? In Canada he joins the army and sees other, comically preposterous ventures at work upon the simple soldier. In England, with the war over, the sea fever has worn off and all that reading of his (and some disappointment in a friend) drives him to a solitary life, the lost, suspicious, furtive life of the sailor on land. Working on the railway he reads Strindberg in the most fitting of surroundings: the deserted goods sheds at night. Mr. Hanley manages these chapters with none of the tedious kind of introspection and self-pity but economically and with truthful gusto. His adventures and his crises are those which come in the course of work, and among those young writers who have found their inspiration in the field, he has a dour, tolerant, concerned, and definite voice of his own. The Addison addict of the little cabin next to the lavatory stands firmly on his own feet able to defend himself.

BROWNING AND MISS WEDGWOOD

By Stephen Potter

ROBERT BROWNING AND JULIA

WEDGWOOD: A Broken Friendship as revealed in their Letters. Edited by Richard Curle. *Murray and Cape*. 10s. 6d. The Wedgwood family seem to have had the happy and even glorious knack of supplying the kind of intelligently admiring friendship necessary to men of genius. Julia Wedgwood, great-granddaughter of the original Josiah, was no exception. There was even a time in her earliest friendship with Robert Browning—he had lost his wife just three years before—when it seemed as if the sympathy might become something more than merely intellectual. She wrote of her "unique trust" in him. He addressed her as "dearest friend."

Then there came a sudden change. It is Julia who writes the letter—"I have reason to know that my pleasure in your company has had an interpretation put upon it that I ought not to allow. . . . You will feel at once that it is a mistake which must be set right by deeds, not words." It is Julia who insists on the parting: but there is a trace of alacrity in Browning's too noble and friendly acquiescence, and when they begin to correspond again, a few years later, the fine mutual sympathy seems lost. Browning sends her his new *Ring and the Book*. Miss Wedgwood, herself by this time a pretty regular reviewer for the quarterlies, is doubtful; refuses to believe; argues that so complete a villain as Guido could never

have been a cultured scholar as well, or fond of Virgil. Browning is half irritated. For a moment Julia Wedgwood seems like his own Gigadibs:

You, Gigadibs, who, thirty years of age,
Write stately for Blackwood's Magazine,
Believe you see two points in Hamlet's soul
Unseized by the Germans yet.

And when, regretting the *Ring and the Book*, she says, "you know you owe us an adequate translation of what your wife was to you," Browning quite bluntly writes back: "Why?"

A sad and fascinating little story in itself: but of course it is the thirty new Browning letters, very good ones, which make this book so important, and—except for one suspected flaw—so valuable. There is no "new light on Browning" here. On the other hand there are fine new examples of known traits. When, in the early letters, he is talking of religion and the problem of sorrow, he is, as so often, at his most involved, and the reader may find once again that when the meaning of the sentence has been run to earth it turns out to be not much more than an argument as to whether or not God is a real man with a beard, whether or not we shall be happy after death, how certainly all spiritualists are frauds. But beyond this there is all the disjointed and satisfying abundance which we think of as "Browning." He takes the theme of *Enoch Arden* by the scruff of the neck, and suggest how *he* might have written it. Then images—the more abstract the theme, the more unexpectedly concrete the metaphor. Landor's death:

the grand old solitary man, beset by weaknesses just as, in his own words, "the elephant is devoured by ants in his inaccessible solitudes." Bless us, if he had let the world tame him and strap a tower on his broad back, what havoc he would have made in the enemy's ranks! As it was, they let off squibs at him and he got into a rage and ran off, topsey-turveying his friends right and left.

Then, the beauty of Browning's description of the day Elizabeth first showed him the *Portuguese Sonnets*. Or the vividness which indignation gives to his words on Keats and the Lockhart review:

Don't believe a man of average sensibility is ever insulted by a blackguard without suffering enough: despise it? Yes, but you fell the slap in the face, too: and, in this case, to feel anything unduly was to spill the fast-lessening life: "the seeds of death were in him already," say the foolish people:—why quicken them under a melon-glass then?

The poet, especially the poet Browning, makes clear by unexpected analogy and contrast. As Julia Wedgwood says, in one of her letters: "Concave and convex are so wonderfully unlike in the world of Art, your concave and convex especially so."

And now for the curious flaw of this book—slight, but not too slight to be mentioned. That clever little criticism I have just quoted of Miss Wedgwood's does not appear in the printed text of her letters. It is taken from the facsimile letter which is reproduced after page 146. Having once had a similar editorial problem to deal with, in order to find out the editor's attitude to nineteenth-century female punctuation, I was curious enough to collate facsimile (page two of the letter) and text. The changes in punctuation seemed to me arbitrary but unimportant. But words are changed also—a sentence is changed. "Will," the second word, is changed to "often." And the first twelve words in the phrase about "concave and convex" are left out altogether, making complete nonsense. Probably something just happened to go wrong with this one particular page, but I guess that Browning scholars, using this book to prove a new chronology of the post-Barrett period, may want to check their quotations with the original letters. In every other respect the production of this book is excellent; and there is a good explanatory introduction.

CHINA'S "UNITED FRONT"

By Charles Davy

CRISIS IN CHINA. By James Bertram.
Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

CHINA AT THE CROSSROADS. By
General and Mme. Chiang Kai-shek.
Faber. 7s. 6d.

Both these books are concerned with the dramatic "Sian affair" of last December, when Chiang Kai-shek, head of the Chinese Government, was kidnapped and held prisoner in North-West China by Chang Hsueh-liang, the "young Marshal" of the Tungpei Army. Mr. Bertram is a New Zealand Rhodes Scholar who went to Peking as occasional correspondent for English newspapers. On hearing of the kidnapping, he travelled with great difficulty to Sian, only to find on his arrival that Chiang Kai-shek had already been released and had returned to Nanking. However, Mr. Bertram had various friends in Sian, and by staying on there he was able to learn all about the affair and to follow its immediate consequences on the spot. *China at the Crossroads*, a much shorter book, consists partly—after some preliminary comments on recent Chinese history—of Madame Chiang Kai-shek's account of how she struggled in Nanking to save her husband's life, eventually flying to Sian to join him, and partly of Chiang Kai-shek's own account, more or less in diary form, of his captivity. An Appendix contains a verbatim report, taken down in shorthand by Madame Chiang Kai-shek, of the Generalissimo's final oration to his captors before he left Sian.

It is a stroke of luck that the two books should have come simultaneously from different publishers, for they are indispensable to each other. Mr. Bertram's treatment of events is much fuller; it reveals many circumstances and motives which the other book—diplomatically—omits. But, although *China at the Crossroads* is obviously not impartial, it colours the story with a note of personal intimacy and throws revealing sidelights—not always

intentional, perhaps—on the characters of its two remarkable authors.

The origins of the Sian affair were quite simple. Chang Hsueh-liang had been sent to Sian to undertake "bandit suppression"—that is, to defeat the Communists. He came to feel that a more important task was to form a united front—in which the Communists were quite ready to join—against Japan. By capturing Chiang Kai-shek, and giving him "advice by military force," he hoped to turn the policy of Nanking in this direction. However, the Generalissimo proved a difficult prisoner. According to his diary, which preserves an incredibly lofty moral tone throughout, he refused to discuss politics and spent his time reading the Bible and lecturing his captors on the iniquity of their behaviour. Most of the diary extracts end with some such sentence as: "Chang saw that he could not compel me to do anything and retired in silence." Madame Chiang Kai-shek admits that the Generalissimo "was perhaps too intolerant of others when they endeavoured to express views to him"; her narrative of these days is much more human and vivid. But only in Mr. Bertram's book is Chiang Kai-shek's real difficulty made clear. His patriotism was socially conservative; he was not prepared to buy the support of the Communist Army against Japan at the price of accepting Communist views on social reform. He was eventually released without agreeing to anything in particular; and Mr. Bertram's book—excellently written and full of varied and vivid detail—ends with the beginning of a renewed campaign against the Communists by Nanking troops. Now it seems that the barbarities of Japan are doing for China what the kidnapping of the Generalissimo could not do. The Red Army is fighting with the armies of Nanking against the invader—but how much of this stricken China, united at last, will survive?

MATURED IN BOTTLE

By Graham Greene

DAYLIGHT AND CHAMPAIGN. By

G. M. Young. *Cape*. 8s. 6d.

Reading a volume of essays is rather like reading a hand: from lines and bumps the character rather optimistically emerges—we do not trouble to read a hand in which we have no interest. In one's youth fortune-telling was a sentimental gambit—an excuse for a mild contact. So *Daylight and Champaign* provides an opportunity of meeting with more intimacy the author of *Gibbon* and *Portrait of an Age*. I don't think that when the desired hand was in my grasp, I was ever really shocked at what lay exposed on the palm—the Mount of Venus undeveloped or the Line of Life sharply broken or what with a nearer relationship might cause some anxiety—a great number of the tiny threads each of which indicates a future child. So the discovery that Mr. Young's taste in English poetry is curiously uncertain or that he is not really much at home outside his chosen period—which may be said to begin exactly two hundred years ago with the birth of Gibbon and to end perhaps with the Great War—doesn't seriously distress us. We have admired him for his limitations as well as for his virtues—as an admirable prose writer, a Tory (“one could hardly wish England a better fortune than to have Peel always at the Home Office, Palmerston at the War Office, and Huskisson at the Board of Trade”), as a Mid-Victorian by choice with an education classical, historical, and above all agnostic.

When he is in his own period every word has validity: the essays on Macaulay and Maitland in particular are magnificent. Who could better this description?—“What aesthetic writers claim a passionate apprehension of form to be to the painter, a passionate apprehension of process is to the historian.” Or this definition of oratory?—“The deliberate evolution of a theme in language meant to tell on the

nerves of the hearers at once, and to stand the test of literature a generation later.” Or this of great writers?—“Those who have succeeded best in saying what they mean, in such a way that other people like to hear them; who have handled the medium of language most precisely, appropriately, and attractively.”

Mr. Young is not an impersonal essayist, and again and again in these pages we are allowed glimpses of his youth before the mask—of the Tory, the Victorian, the sceptic—was completely adjusted: we see him reading all one July *The Earthly Paradise* “in an enchantment such as no other book has ever cast on me, except, when I was a child, the *Mort Darthur*, and later, the *Odyssey*”; getting up early in 1893 to learn by what majority the Lords had thrown out the Home Rule Bill; and “never shall I forget the evening when I took down *Domesday and Beyond*, and read and read, till the owl in the fir-tree began audibly to wonder why the lamp was still burning; the little breezes that stray down the dene from Wansdyke turned chilly; and the dawn came.”

Well, the mask fits now: we owe a lot to the mask—no one but a fellow sceptic could have written so delightfully of Gibbon—though the limitations it enforces are sometimes rather lamentable. Mr. Young tells us that beyond a reading of three of Shakespeare's plays in Verity's edition he was never instructed in English literature. There is a note of rather middle-aged defiance in this statement—“what was good enough for me is good enough for you”; but what are we to say of a critic who is ready to throw *Don Sebastian* to the rubbish basket: who classes Miss Waddell's *Abelard* with Mrs. Woolf's *The Years* (will *Sparkenbroke* turn up, shaking his Byronic curls?): a critic who declares crustily that he cannot scan “Down arterial roads riding in April” and wants to rewrite the line to a good tum-tum

measure, "Riding in April down arterial roads"? (He adds the rather odd definition, which effectively excludes most seventeenth-century poetry: "I say that a line scans when without any straining of the words or melody, it can be sung to an easy or popular tune.") One has a delightful breathless vision of Mr. Young singing the *Canons of Giant Art* which he so much admires.)

What can we say—except that he is in his limitations as well as his virtues most certainly a Victorian? A Victorian of Froude's vintage when he writes that "Jesuits and their Pope neither the Elizabethan nor any other generation of Englishmen would endure," forgetting too easily the long roll of common men who sheltered Campion and the martyrs, or of Butler's when he reads into St. Joan's reply to her voices "But I can't ride!" a child's "dearly cherished and long-hidden dream." Who said anything about riding? Mr. Young too smartly inquires, as if when Mr. Young protests, "But I am a bad sailor" when a voice urges him to New York, a higher critic should comment, "Who said anything about sailing?"

DESCENT INTO HELL

MORWYN, OR THE VENGEANCE OF GOD. By John Cowper Powys.

Cassell. 7s. 6d.

A man, his dog, his girl, and her father, who is a vivisectionist, are thrust into subterranean Hell by the fall of a giant meteor. The vivisectionist is killed. His devoted daughter, Morwyn, resolves to rescue her father from damnation. The description of Hell's scenery, with its abysses and its twin idols of "Bloody Religion and Bloody Science," has a rather commonplace majesty. The occasional suggestions of scientific explanation are ludicrously inadequate and unnecessary.

Inevitably we encounter the Marquis

de Sade. To harrow Morwyn, he explains that Hell is peopled exclusively by the cruel, and that of these the worst are the vivisectionists. Obsessed, self-tortured, the sadists of all kinds crowd before innumerable television-screens to watch the diabolical experiments that are perpetrated in the upper world. Throughout the story the endearing antics of the spaniel claim our compassion. Torquemada appears, itching to burn Morwyn's body for her soul's salvation. Calvin and Nero, with hosts of the damned, lustfully pursue her. But the bard, Taliesin, a visitor to Hell, pilots the living man and maid and dog through adventures the significance of which is either superficial or too profound for my understanding.

From the dust-cover we learn that Mr. Powys considers this his best book. We must therefore regard it as an aesthetic expression of his deepest convictions. The opening, in spite of its farcical mechanism, seems to promise a real display of imagination and satire, even of metaphysical truth. But the sequel, though it does afford some brilliant flashes, becomes increasingly laboured and confused. Of course the condemnation of cruelty, most hateful of all vices, must be applauded; particularly in our day, when cruelty, rampant or furtive, seems to be increasing. But there are other deadly sins: sheer callous self-regard, for instance, which has not the excuse of obsession. Mr. Powys's treatment of the sadists, moreover, itself smacks of sadism. He revels in their exquisite damnation. Disguised sadism, too, lurks in his relish of the peril of the sweet girl and the winsome spaniel. This may explain the extravagance, the lack of judgment, in his affirmation that the ruling motive of all biological experimentation is torture, that all its reputed beneficial achievements are false, and that the scientific will itself, in every sphere, is at bottom a sadistic lust to pull to pieces. These extreme charges, if they are not to appear frivolous, must be presented dispassionately and with evidence.

OLAF STAPLEDON

VICTORIAN PIONEERS

By Ronald Lewin

TOWARDS THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By H. V. Routh. *Cambridge University Press*. 21s.

Adolescents notoriously feel rebellious and hypercritical about their parents, and it has taken us a long time to grow out of this attitude towards the Victorians. But nowadays the malicious snigger and the calculated denigration which were customary in books about them are less frequent, and books like G. M. Young's admirable *Portrait of An Age* and Professor Routh's new assessment are setting the right critical tone. They are on the look out for achievement rather than weaknesses and are more interested in Achilles's victories than his tender heel. They criticize, they laugh at the figures about whom they write: but it is the laughter and the criticism of respect.

Professor Routh reviews the period as a whole. He tries to distinguish the main trends of thought and to estimate their various specifications in the work of poets, philosophers, scientists, and theologians of the era. And he attempts to show how and why they anticipated the main categories of twentieth-century thought. His book is long, it might well have been intolerably dull, as such reviews so frequently are, and his method of taking his writers one by one might very easily have produced a mere catalogue. But the scope of his theme demanded a long book and he has a capacity for generalization and synthesis sufficient to bind it together. Each chapter falls into place as a novel illustration of how an individual in his own unique way promoted and avoided a universal tendency. The book has certain patent faults. Its style is occasionally prolix; sometimes Professor Routh has endeavoured to crowd too many names into a paragraph, as though he were a contributor to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, frightened of omitting anyone conceivably of importance: and throughout he is a

little too prone to that weakness of Professors of English literature which Mr. Stephen Potter mocked so deliciously in *The Muse in Chains*—the habit of talking in terms of "isms," of making everyone exemplify rationalism or naturalism or romanticism or any other coinable "ism" which suggests itself.

But, if we follow his own method and look rather for the major qualities than the minor failings, his book has considerable merit. It may be said to revolve round "Mill on Liberty." Professor Routh considers that to be the intellectual pivot of his period. 1859 in his view is the watershed between two predominant tendencies. Until that date he considers that, taking the writers of the period by and large, we may say that they were still fetish-worshippers attempting to reconcile their individual opinions with certain preconceived intellectual and emotional standards widely accepted: but that after Mill's lucid claim for freedom of thought there occurred a sort of general release of speculation. The *malaise* of this second period, of which Matthew Arnold is the obvious instance, he considers to have been due to the failure of the now uninhibited thinkers to construct a system of beliefs as comprehensive, satisfying, and apparently impregnable as the one which they had destroyed. This failure was accompanied by an increased introversion. The *malaise*, the '*autopsie perpétuelle et journalière de son être*' which is never sated, is their legacy to our own century.

The conclusions are perhaps not strikingly original. But what matters is the detailed consideration of each particular writer and how he produced his own variation on the general trend. Professor Routh's book should certainly be read for the sanity, clarity, and learning which he displays in his exposition. These virtues never fail him.

NEW LITERATURE

CHINESE FOLK-SONG

By Edmund Blunden

THE BOOK OF SONGS. Translated from the Chinese. By Arthur Waley. *Allen and Unwin*. 10s. 6d.

There can be very few people in the world competent to discuss Mr. Waley's work as a translator of Chinese and Japanese classics from the point of view of scholarship; and I should doubt whether many of them even would be able to harass him seriously on points which he has examined and interpreted in a fresh way. I recollect hearing a Japanese authority formerly talk of his versions of their ancient literature, and it seemed to me then from the anxious insistency with which supposed errors of his were produced that there could not be much question on the whole of his formidable accomplishment. The objections indicated the main acceptance.

To the remarkable series of Oriental studies and versions which Mr. Waley has given us already *The Book of Songs* is a remarkable addition. It is not only a new translation in the simple sense; it is largely the first English translation in which the false growths of tradition have been cut away from the simplicity of the originals. "The preservation of the *Songs* is due to the fact that they were used for a variety of social and educational purposes which had nothing to do with their original intention." Mr. Waley goes on to explain how Confucius advised his countrymen to use them, and how they were at length provided with allegorical values:

So wisest commentators view
In Homer more than Homer knew.

His own effective comparisons for this missionary process include that of the Song of Solomon, wherein the plain mention of an apple-tree was mystically

converted into a prophetic vignette of the Cross of Christ.

In abandoning such distortions, Mr. Waley does not claim to be pioneering; he refers to M. Granet's *Fêtes et Chansons de la Chine Ancienne*, 1911, and to the advance made by sinology since that date. So that we others, who look on the whole performance of deciphering any Chinese writing as something like magic, may rest satisfied unless some unexpected adversary of Mr. Waley's theories arises with equal shrewdness, patience, literary mastery at large, and other resources. But such a protagonist is not likely to arise. The general position is against it. "It is no accident," Mr. Waley writes in one of his numerous enlightening notes, "that early Chinese songs and ballads are on the whole very like those of Europe, and that even when their content is different it still remains of a kind fairly easy for us to understand. The two civilizations are fundamentally very similar." While he is addressing us thus, and reminding us of the characteristics of our own folk-song, we may still be thinking of the fact that the songs which he translated are a mere 2,000 years older than our own.

Cold blows the northern wind,
Thick falls the snow.
Be kind to me, love me,
Take my hand and go with me.
Yet she lingers, yet she havers!
There is no time to lose. . . .

Nothing is redder than the fox,
Nothing blacker than the crow.
Be kind to me, love me,
Take my hand and ride with me.
Yet she lingers, yet she havers!
There is no time to lose.

That timeless song is not hard for us to hear distinctly and intimately—it is almost

our own. It is not strange for us to find that the ballad poet requires of us, now and then, a little aptitude for riddles; Mr. Waley encourages us to approach his Chinese "Reliques" with our normal observancy. After the first two lines of the concluding stanza quoted, he gives us the hint: we are to understand, "And no one truer than I."

In another of his notes, Mr. Waley impresses on us the resemblance between the English and early Chinese languages—in word order, binomes, and "a number of roots." However, that part of his subject is not one which we need examine, only noticing that in his self-effacing way he speaks of the language relationship as contributing "to the ease with which it is possible to turn the songs into a comprehensible English form." He has translated them into a resolutely simple English, undaubed with those pseudo-ballad touches ("I ween," "of yore," and the rest) which are apt to be found in renderings of eastern verse of great age.

The effect of modern romantic poetry is as far as possible excluded, and we receive the picture of ancient Chinese life and manners in bold clear strokes—a scroll of excellent variety, restored to its true design by a masterly enthusiast.

IN LINE

STARTING POINT. By C. Day Lewis.
Cape. 7s. 6d.

This, the author's second novel, is the story of four young men. When we meet them they are at Oxford, members of the same college, close friends sharing the same diggings, but sharply contrasted in temperament, birth, and ambition. When we leave them, a few years later, they have all tried and failed to effect a reconciliation between their aspirations and the conditions of existence in contemporary society. One has sought refuge in the grave, another in chemistry and the arms of a wife, another in the bosom of Rome, and the fourth, similarly anxious to have all his doubts resolved for him, has sub-

merged himself in the Communist Party. Lest the reader should be uncertain where to place the blame, the novel carries a moral, strongly emphasized. The separate failures of the four young men to come to terms with the world and achieve their promise must be charged against the Capitalist system.

The position which Mr. Lewis has won for himself in the younger generation of intellectuals is not merely that of author or even of poet. He is one of their leaders in thought, speech, and action, and a novel by him will inevitably be scrutinized as something more than a story or a message. It is, like all novels, a pretty complete revelation as artist, citizen, and man of the novelist who wrote it. Again and again in the pages of *Starting Point* beauty of imagery and aptness of simile proclaim the poet. Traces of the gifted novelist are, if rarer, plentiful enough to ensure that even readers who have never heard of the author will derive pleasure and interest from his book. But the social and political thinker, that side of himself which Mr. Lewis is most anxious to introduce and we to meet, is disappointingly vague and even immature. The man who tries to combine art and propaganda is always apt to appear crude, but there is an immaturity about Mr. Lewis's contribution to the problems of the times which has nothing to do with art or propaganda. "Reality," his watchword, becomes in time a catchword, useful in eliciting cheers but leaving the argument where it was. In the absence of any definition from the author it is not easy to know what meaning he attaches to it, but it seems to be loosely applied. Readers who care to examine, for instance, pp. 266-8, and to try to discover the precise meaning which the author attaches to the word on each of these separate pages, may, if successful in this, search for a meaning which will cover the three occasions. Unless such questions are capable of an answer, a book of this nature cannot be caught, held, and experienced.

ARNOLD PALMER

THE POETRY OF LAURENCE HOUSMAN

By Hugh I'A. Fausset

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF LAURENCE HOUSMAN. *Sidgwick and Jackson*. 10s. 6d.

These Collected Poems, Mr. Housman tells us, cover a period of fifty years during which his ideals, literary tastes, and convictions have changed considerably. Yet whatever changes there may have been in his attitude toward life, the quality of his verse has altered little during all that time. He is not, indeed, a poet who projects himself so completely into his verse that it bears in every line and image the high pressure of unique experience. The experience it reflects is always his own, and often it is unusual and suggestive. But it is generally reflected rather than fully embodied in verse that flows gracefully and mellifluously through all sorts of metrical channels, but which seldom achieves a completely expressive form. At its weakest it has no real necessity. Or the feeling is so faintly distilled in the words that they evoke little more than a mental assent, as in the following, entitled "The Fellow-Travellers":

Fellow-travellers here with me,
Loose for good each other's loads!
Here we come to the cross-roads:
Here must parting be.

Where will you five be to-night?
Where shall I? We little know.
Loosed from you, I let you go
Utterly from sight.

Far away go taste, and touch,
Far go sight, and sound, and smell!
Fellow-travellers, fare ye well,—
You I loved so much!

Admittedly this is one of his earlier poems, but the want of intensity is a persisting characteristic and affects even such poems as "The Call of Winter," "Badcome Fair-Night," or parts of "Rue," which are fashioned with a tense brevity that hints a kinship with the author of "A Shrop-

shire Lad." Yet it is in "Rue" and "Spikenard," collections of poems that express a religious attitude which is, he confesses, no longer his, that some of his most concentrated work is to be found. Particularly in the former there is the vital tension of a man torn between the necessity of accepting the mystery of God's perfection and the fact of human pain. The reality of that unresolved conflict of heart and mind sounds again and again throughout "Rue," in the "furthest cry" of the soul for deliverance, for example, in the poem composed in the Sistine Chapel:

"Thou that hast shaped our suffering thus,
Grant us this last relief:
Be sorry now, and loose from us
The glory and the grief!

Since Thou hast given us to corrupt
Flesh and fair earth, now scan
Thy making, surfeited and supped,
Thy maggot-worker, man!"

O Counsel-Darkener, over me
Still let Thy glooms expand;
More darkness, Lord!—lest I should see
Thy Face, and understand!

In the poems in "Spikenard," in which he contemplates with sustained devotion the sacrificial life of Christ, the conflict between the "earthly sight" and the "Heavenly view" is eased, if not wholly resolved, in the vision of a love from which self-love has been cast out. And essentially the same truth, divested of specific Christian symbolism, is the theme of a later poem, entitled "Beautiful Heart." Yet though it is "Love divine" which moves him to his most impassioned utterance, as it is the final reconciliation with life realized through such love and beautifully imagined in such a poem as "Post Mortem" that is the goal of his experience, much of his verse is concerned with lesser loves and interests. For, as he writes of "Love divine,"

Man, though he love thee after, must love
life first!

And these Collected Poems certainly prove the variety and versatility of his loves. Mythology, legend, history, the country and the countryman, the tragedies of his time and the secret needs of his own heart, all flower freshly, if at times rather flimsily, in his verse. Some of his early romantic verses such as "The Elfin Bride" are apt to be tunelessly pretty, but when he sings of the little Stuart princess who died, or retells the legend of the death of St. Christopher, or pays his tribute to "Henri Pol, Bird-lover," his touch is as tender as it is charming. The pathos, too, of rural characters that are passing away is in such poems as "Old Swanage," "Gaffer at the Fair," or "Johnnie Kigarow." He ranges over many themes in lyrical, ironical, meditative, or romantic mood. His verse is sometimes thin, but always rhythmically easy and happily phrased. And there is no doubting the weight of meaning with which, explicitly in his tribute to Thomas Hardy and implicitly elsewhere, he expresses his faith in the ancient virtues of man:

Patience, endurance, kindness, courage still,
And pity—when life's fire to ash has
burned.

A LIFE OF DARWIN

CHARLES DARWIN. By Geoffrey West.
Routledge. 15s.

Charles Darwin's theories have long been taken for granted by the general public—unfortunately, Mr. West thinks, for the happiness of mankind—and Charles Darwin himself, that "typical Victorian," has not been usually regarded as a particularly interesting figure, apart from his intellectual qualities. So no substantial biography has been published, from the pen of a British writer, since 1887. Mr. West's able and entertaining volume sets out to correct the popular assumptions as to Darwin's achievement and character.

Sir James Jeans and Mr. Gerald Heard have exploded the myth that to be informative is to be "dry." An alert and pointed if not always syntactically impeccable style aligns Mr. West with his distinguished predecessors in this vein.

He has no difficulty in proving that "Darwinism" does not provide a working philosophy of life. Its truth was fragmentary, its heresy our superstition. For much of the violent materialism of to-day may be traced to it. As for Darwin himself, Mr. West can prove little more than that this "very nice old man" speculated boldly and logically, observed and worked with exceptional keenness in his own special field. But a hundred "Eminent Victorians," one continues to believe, were far more exciting as human beings. What Mr. West triumphantly makes clear is that nothing concerning the life and work of the man who succeeded Newton and was succeeded by Freud, whose spiritual ancestors were Descartes and Galileo, can be uninteresting.

JAMES CLEUGH

THE STORY OF ODYSSEUS

in the new translation by
W. H. D. ROUSE

"Vivid, simple description, swift narrative, and humorous dialogue. . . . There is much in it that is brilliantly successful, that is unique in its manifestation of the author's love for Homer, his eagerness to make the story live again for English readers."—*London Mercury*

NELSON, 7/6

MISTRAL

By Austin Clarke

DREAMER AND STRIVER: The Poetry of Frédéric Mistral. By C. M. Girdlestone. *Methuen*. 10s. 6d.

The rumblings of the machine age in the 'forties of the last century were responsible for an amazing revival of poetry. Epics appeared once more and we can, at least, say that an older rural life expired fittingly in fine literature. The name of Frédéric Mistral is better known, for instance, than that of Karl Spitteler, partly because the French are always astonished that a poet should actually live in the country and they become highly excited. Partly it is due to the fact that Mistral, with the unaccountable obstinacy of genius, insisted on writing in the dialect of his native Provence. To revive and use successfully the *Langue d'Oc*, which had dwindled since the great age of the *trouvères*, lingering only in the doggerel of village rhymsters, was in itself a challenge to common sense. It is true that there had been faint stirrings; these, however, would have come to nothing but for Mistral and the *Felibres*.

As a practical measure the attempted revival of Provençal failed, but it produced several epics and in them the language will continue to live and attract the curious. Here and there regionalism will still continue to fight a losing battle, but if it produces good poetry we should not complain too much. Mr. Girdlestone draws an interesting parallel with the present official attempt of the Irish Free State Government, on a much greater scale, to revive the Irish language. Unfortunately, governments cannot produce great poets at will, and despite its elaborate richness as a medium, Irish has not produced a modern poet of any considerable range. In wayward fashion, Mr. Hugh MacDiarmid has undertaken the task of re-establishing the great medium of Scots. Mindful of the fact that Europe for many centuries expressed its spiritual

life in a vanished language, Mr. James Joyce is industriously constructing a dead language of his own.

The centenary of Mistral's birth was celebrated in 1930 with the customary deluge of books and articles. But Mr. Girdlestone assumes correctly that the average English reader is not acquainted with his poetry either in French or in the original Provençal. His book, therefore, is primarily written in a spirit of appreciation and of painstaking explanation. If it tempts some to read *Mirèio* and the *Rhone-Poem* with the aid of a French key his object will have been achieved. He deals to some extent with the political complications of the regionalist movement. But his main concern is with Mistral, the poet. He shows how Mistral completely expressed the traditional life of Provence, its daily round, its legends, lore, and religious faith. But some firm grasp of the nettles which Mistral avoided would have made his book more suitable to our times. Like Bjørnson and other ample writers of pioneering spirit, Mistral identified the epic mood with good health and virtue. It may be suspected that the virginal quality of *Mirèio* was part of its attraction for the sophisticated, and one would have liked to know how far Mistral's naïve religion influenced the modern neo-Catholic poetic escape from centuries of theology into a world of simple wonders. Mr. Girdlestone, in his enthusiasm for good health and honest toil, forgets that another literary fashion intervenes between us and Mistral's idyllic vision. *Les Flammands* of Verhaeren exploded the idyllic mood; and here and in America an entire school of writers impute to the unfortunate and last tillers of the soil a multitude of perversities which would probably astonish even Dr. Freud. The realists may be all wrong, but we must account for them before returning to the Golden Age.

THE POET LAUREATE

PEPITA

THE SQUARE PEG OR THE GUN-FELLA. By John Masefield. *Heinemann*. 7s. 6d.

The mass slaughter of ordinary human beings is so much in our minds these days that this novel directed against the fox-hunting community will, no doubt, attract less controversial attention than it would have done twenty-five years ago. Nevertheless one is glad to feel that it will sting those who still think it a crime to shoot a fox and a sport to stake its earth and watch it torn to pieces by hounds. Mr. Masefield has given us a bitterly penned picture of such people—surviving atavistically on their dwindling estates with Jorrocks for their Bible, an “after Reynolds” in the hall and a “School of Kneller” in the dining-room. Mr. Masefield’s method of dealing with them (like his hero’s) is neither gentle nor brutal; if it does not shew the dramatic fantasy of “Lady Into Fox” it is none the less effective as propaganda. It may not wring the withers, but it certainly rings the bell.

The story, as one might expect, is direct and simply told. Frampton, a wealthy inventor and manufacturer of guns, buys a charming but derelict house in the heart of sporting country; he restores it with considerable taste as a home for himself and Margaret, whom he is about to marry. Just before the wedding Margaret is killed in a motor accident. The loss hardens a growing contempt for his hunting neighbours into something approaching hatred.

Frampton is an interesting character: hard, virile, cultured—a beneficent dictator who believes in guns, garden cities, and the right kind of war memorial. At any rate he is more likeable than his enemies, whom Mr. Masefield has rather naughtily overdrawn. Surely the really pukka huntswoman would be as appalled by the red fingernails, pencilled eyebrows, and vermilion mouths of his “absooty marvours” hunting girls as he is himself.

CHRISTOPHER SALTMARSH

PEPITA. By V. Sackville-West. *Hogarth Press*. 10s. 6d.

Ancestry can be a fine possession. To have had Pepita for grandmother, Catalina for great-grandmother and all the turmoil of their brightly coloured vitality at the back of one’s life! “One day in the early autumn of 1849, a strange Andalusian trio presented itself at the Teatro del Principe, Madrid, and demanded an interview with the Director of the Ballet”—the beginning of a tale that rivals Grand Opera in coloratura. Catalina, seller of old clothes, widow of a barber, and living with a personage who had been charcoal-burner, bandit, and smuggler, was resolved to make her daughter Pepita a dancer. And though Pepita was never of the first rank—good enough for Germany and England, but not for Spain—a dancer she became and made money enough to set up Catalina and the ex-bandit in a fine house, with servants, and horses, and armchairs for Mass. Pepita was lovely enough to be remembered by all who knew her. Miss Sackville-West feels and conveys her enchantment, but the reader may find richer matter in Catalina, domineering, shrewd, acquisitive, generous, mischief-making. The second part of the book is given to Pepita’s daughter, who became Lady Sackville.

It is a fantastic but a lovely adventure to read the book. Catalina’s friend the washerwoman, cousin Juan peddling fruit with his donkey in Malaga streets, lovely Pepita, the mistress of the English “count,” her daughter, arriving in England with a certificate in her pocket that might help her to be a governess, and becoming her father’s hostess at the Legation in Washington, and then chatelaine at Knole—the contrasts are as odd as the oil lamp with the pink china shade that the Sackville family used at Knole. Odd, but lightly emancipating, as it always is to swing high and low.

MARY CROSBIE

MECHANISTIC BIOGRAPHY

By Richard Church

JOHN BUNYAN: MAKER OF MYTHS.

By Jack Lindsay. *Methuen*. 10s. 6d.

When the publisher says on the dust-jacket of this book that "it is in many ways a new Bunyan that emerges from this scrutiny," he does not exaggerate. Indeed, it is a Bunyan who will not readily be recognized by the readers of *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Holy War*, and *Grace Abounding*. We might quote Bunyan's *Apology*, where he says:

When at the first I took my pen in hand,
Thus for to write, I did not understand
That I at all should make a little book
In such a mode. . . .

Mr. Lindsay's mode is the Freudian-Marxist one. He has gone to great pains to collect the facts of Bunyan's life, such as we see them presented in Macaulay's article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and the several biographical studies by Southey, Froude, Mark Rutherford, and J. Brown. Mr. Lindsay adds something of his own in his clear and interesting examination of the economic and political background of Stuart England, before which Bunyan played tipcat and wrestled with Satan. In addition to this, Mr. Lindsay has moments of insight where he trusts to his own judgment and self-expression, and these occur most frequently when he is relating Bunyan to that carefully constructed background. Thus he accounts illuminatingly for Bunyan's obstinate provincialism of mind. "What lies behind his attitude to the learning of the 'wise men' whom he despises? Partly, the scorn of the underdog who out of his sufferings has realized a sense of human unity that transcends the meagre humanities of the ruling class. Partly, the anarchist resentment born of this scorn. Partly, a deeper sense of movements and discoveries, derived from experience, which were unsettling and disproving the eternal verities of the 'wise men.' Bacon, as well

as Bunyan, was rejecting Aristotle and Plato; and so the voices of scientist and dissident tinker merge on this point, however differently tuned and intended. The challenge to authority all along the line was, in the last analysis, working for a common end." That, with certain reservations about Bacon being a scientist who rejected Aristotle, can be accepted.

When Mr. Lindsay plunges into interpretations of Bunyan's conduct and ideas, however, he speaks to a narrower audience, to whom the jargon of psycho-analysis serves in place of real interpretation. The more cautious reader asks how much nearer to understanding he is when Mr. Lindsay dismisses the famous hallucinations of the boy Bunyan as a Freudian struggle against his father. There may be something in the argument, but presented in such ritualistic terms, it is emphasized and exaggerated to the point of absurdity. "Both the devil and God are father-figures, derived immediately from family experience but finding their deeper meaning rooted in social reality. For everything specifically human in the family relationships is born from the wider social structure enclosing the family." Such wide generalizations undermine the reader's confidence. But worse than mere generalization results from such methods of thought. Here, for example, is Mr. Lindsay's allusion to Bunyan's renunciation of his innocent hobby of bell-ringing:

Dare he go on ringing the bell of the church-tower? There were five bells, and he loved to ring one of them when the peals were wanted. The fact that he loved the work made it seem devilish. And there was a man, the story went, who had been struck dead by lightning in some other church of the county, whilst ringing a bell. No, Bunyan dared not go on raising that clangour in the sky. The tower would topple down on him and kill him. The tower of father-pride, the erection of power, would

slay him. He dare not measure himself against it. He shivered with castration-terror.

How much nearer the mysteries of religious terror are we by calling them the "castration-fear of father-vengeance, the fear of the murder-phallos"? Such methods of thought are only a latter-day occultism; a terminology which loses much in replacing Bunyan's own simple, mythical interpretation of his experiences.

METCALFE IN INDIA

THE LIFE OF CHARLES, LORD METCALFE. By Edward Thompson. *Faber.* 21s.

A debt of gratitude is due to Mr. Edward Thompson for the prodigious amount of research work which has gone to the making of this biography. It is a masterly treatise of the life work of the man who, before all others, was instrumental in the moulding of our Indian Empire during the first thirty-five years of the last century. It was the period when the predatory activity of the rulers of the many native states presented to the British in India a situation somewhat analogous to that existing in China after the recent revolution, when China was disrupted by the cupidity of the many upstart war-lords.

Metcalfe's period of service in India synchronized with the era in which "shaking the Pagoda-tree" for individual enrichment took precedence of most other duties. It is a fine epitaph to him as an administrator and statesman that his biographer is able to say:

To him, more than any other man who had been in India, was due the high conception of duty, that after his day justified the reputation of British Administration.

Upon his arrival in Calcutta in 1800 Metcalfe became a protégé of Lord Wellesley, then Governor-General. Lord Wellesley, much in the same manner as

did Lord Milner in South Africa a hundred years later, surrounded himself with a group of young men of pronounced ability, most of whom, as with the Milner clique, were to justify their selection by reaching in the future high administrative posts. Lord Wellesley's circle were old Etonians and styled themselves the "Howe Boys." In due course, between them they practically ruled India. Metcalfe was the most successful "Howe Boy." Early in his career, after the usual despondency common to exiles, he mapped out for himself an ambitious future. He never deviated from his intention one day to become Governor-General. If he had been less honest, and had not fallen foul of the "Pagoda-tree combine," then bleeding white the Nizam in Hyderabad—all of which sordid story is well told in the chapter called "cleansing the Augean Stables"—he would have attained his object. As it was he became acting Governor-General, though later he was to be Governor of Jamaica, and Governor-General in Canada.

It is impossible in the space of a short review to do justice to this comprehensive biography, or to follow the young Metcalfe in his extraordinarily successful negotiations with Runjit Singh, the Lion of the Punjab, or his establishment of himself, practically, as the "King of Delhi." It is all a fascinating story, and as Mr. Thompson gives it, it puts quite another complexion upon Metcalfe's life and character from that suggested in the jaundiced estimate of Kaye the historian, who apparently could never forgive Metcalfe his inability to excel as a horseman, or to participate in the "manly" pastimes. Courage, however, is not confined to field sports. No one who reads this biography, or peruses the many "minutes" Metcalfe penned, can be left in any doubt as to his moral courage. It was never forgotten by the soldiers, his contemporaries, that as a youthful "Political" Metcalfe accompanied the storming-party up the breach, when Bharatpur's fortress of Dig was stormed and captured.

LIONEL JAMES

BLANCHIANA

PORTRAITS OF A LIFE-TIME.
MEMOIRS OF JACQUES-EMILE
BLANCHE. With an introduction by
Harley Granville-Barker. *Dent*. 18s.

Painter of portraits distinguished for character and elegance, later a chronicler in writing of war-time actualities, Monsieur Blanche now reveals to the public the conversational powers which, even without his art and his fortunate circumstances, might have secured him a welcome in the eminent international circles that he now sketches from memory. These scraps, as he himself calls them, seem to have been poured out to the stenographer, as they might to a sympathetic audience of one or more, in an unceasing flow of liveliness with flashes of brilliant description and vivid colour, but with the disconcerting abruptness of transition and the loose ends which pass unnoticed in conversation, and, not infrequently, with the seemingly subtle or pregnant phrases which startle and delight when accompanied by a laugh or a glance of understanding but on reflection are all but unintelligible.

For successful "Table-talk," however, more than a stenographer or a phonograph is needed. The reader, bruised with tumbling among the decades, cities, and persons, cries out either for greater concentration or for the old-fashioned method of isolated anecdote. Perhaps the latter would best fit M. Blanche's brilliant external characterizations which convince as actual experiences whether they were genuinely impressed upon the artist's eye at the time or have formed themselves subsequently through the artist's power of investing character with appropriate, almost symbolic, visual detail. The notes on Rodin, Sargent, Nijinsky, and the foreign habitués of distinction who frequented the old Hotel Dieudonné are especially illuminating. One other great merit is possessed by these Memoirs. Eminent as are all the personages described, for achievement, rank, or wealth, they are introduced for their own sake and not, as in so many

books of the kind, to reflect glory upon the narrator. In this the author is seen, as Mr. Granville-Barker suggests in his sympathetic Preface and as M. Blanche never himself implies for an instant, to be much more truly distinguished, much more the "real thing," than many of the prominent persons who cross and recross his pages.

PAUL OPPÉ

SIR RONALD STORRS

ORIENTATIONS. By Sir Ronald Storrs. *Nicholson and Watson*. 21s.

The late T. E. Lawrence called the author of this autobiography the "most brilliant Englishman in the Near East." That was twenty-one years ago, and afterwards the man who when he met Lawrence was Oriental Secretary in Cairo became successively Governor of Jerusalem and Governor of Cyprus, in which latter place he lost all his possessions, other than the letters he had written home from the East and his own photographic memory.

Having lost so much it is remarkable that Sir Ronald has so much to give. This volume is replete with fresh description of people and of places; it abounds in good stories; and it constantly displays those qualities of mind, of cultural predilection, which inevitably appealed to Lawrence. For all his administrative preoccupations, Sir Ronald constantly refreshed his soul with literature, music, and art. His range of interests was catholic, and, though an Imperialist, he preserved throughout an essentially liberal attitude towards the practical problems that he was called upon to solve. For instance, while he could see the advantages in Egypt's being annexed to the British Empire, he held himself faithfully to Cromer's ideal of a self-governing Egypt; and while he could sympathize with the great Zionist dream, he sternly discountenanced the tendency of those who fain would rebuild Zion in a day, or on a numerical basis.

'Cheerfulness is the daughter of employment

I have known a man to return in high spirits from a funeral, solely because he had the management of it.'

This saying of Bishop Horne is eminently applicable to Mr. G. M. Young's collection of essays. In the best of tempers, *sine ira et odio*, he celebrates the obsequies of English culture, and goes home to reflect benevolently on the merits of the departed. What good company one used to meet there, from Herodotus to Disraeli! What excellent music after dinner! What a house, too, where you slept in a medieval turret and had your bath in a powdering closet! And what an estate!

Daylight and Champaign by G. M. YOUNG
8s. 6d. net

'Shoes, and Ships, and Sealing-Wax'

and the etceteras were the best set of essay-titles ever proposed. Here is a miscellany which would have delighted *The Walrus and the Carpenter*. Its subjects range from Fans to Owls, from Pepper to Pinchbeck, from Clocks to Coaches, from Goldoni or the Fuggers to the great Heidegger.

The Mancroft Essays

by ARTHUR MICHAEL SAMUEL (Lord Mancroft)

10s. 6d. net

The Radical Tory illustrates Disraeli's political development, from his early writings and speeches, selected, edited, and introduced by H. W. J. EDWARDS, with a preface by G. M. Young.

Disraeli has never been a spent force in English political ideas. His doctrines form a body of Tory truth which is far more opposite to our own day than is often supposed. Especially in his early writings there is a great deal that is unduly neglected and particularly apt. The introduction and notes make clear his criticism of Whiggery, the Manchester economists, and the dry-as-dust Tories of the time, as also his sympathy with the Radicals of the Cobbett School and with the Chartists and their supporters among the poor. The book is not merely a valuable guide to the ideas of a great Victorian: it is a stimulus to apply them to a later age.

8s. 6d. net

JONATHAN CAPE THIRTY BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON

The author has at once an impressionable and an impressive mind. Two personalities have stamped their impress indelibly upon his memory—T. E. Lawrence and Henry Cust. The latter influenced him when he was in his most creative years, opening vistas of intellectual joy. From the former he gained an impulse to wrestle with the depths of life, the “questionings” which, except for those who have dogmatic faith, are never finally answered. It is curious, incidentally, that by a man who adores the classics and Bach and chess Lawrence should be “romanticized”; one might expect a stricter, more analytical treatment of such a genius.

But this autobiography has many excellences. It is written with frankness, urbane rather than devastating, and with an elegance and an allusiveness which, to those who know how soporific an effect the Near East can produce on original minds, are most attractive.

KENNETH WILLIAMS

NEW YORK CALLING

CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT. By Edna St. Vincent Millay. *Hamish Hamilton*. 6s.

Miss Millay is said to be the most popular poet in the U.S.A.; it must be this great responsibility that has prompted her to show America to America. She does this in a long dialogue-cum-narrative poem, staging a symposium in the elegant drawing-room off Fifth Avenue of one Ricardo—cynic, rationalist, liberal.

Midnight. Midnight in New York . . .
 . . . Midnight in London; midnight in Madrid.
 The whole world rolling in darkness, as if it feared an air-raid.
 Not a mortal soul that can see his hand before his face.

Ricardo and his guests—a Roman Catholic priest, a wild Communist poet, a nice

young painter who would believe in something if he could, a popular writer, an advertising man, a rich stockbroker—sit round and discuss this gloomy state of affairs. The characters speak usually in heavy, slangy blank-verse; sometimes they burst into sonnets, or use a quasi-rhetorical form of free verse. It is all very “naturalistic”; they chat about this machine-age, noise, war, politics, religion; serious talk is interspersed with, oh! so realistic comments on shootin’, racin’, or women; drinks circulate; a feller leaves the room (loud sound of plug-pulling off).

But whether Miss Millay is being an awfully tough guy, or smart in a cocktail manner, or what her publishers coyly call “daring,” there is beneath this disillusioned man-of-the-world attitude a windy emotionalism which is very painful.

We do not doubt Miss Millay’s sincerity; she feels that amongst the other values that have gone west is the dignity of language:

We are a nation of word-killers: *hero, veteran, tragedy*,—
 Watch the great words go down.

(advertising is responsible for this); she feels that

This monosyllabic, meagre, stale, inflated,
 abused unlovely carcass
 Of the great English tongue,
 All English-speaking people
 Clip or drawl, squeal, mumble, swallow,
 giggle, grunt—so seldom speak—

is “the certain voice of an uncertain moment”—and it may well be that her theme calls for neither a grand manner, nor yet, perhaps, for “pure” poetry. But the function of the poet is to forge a contemporary, and a living poetic idiom. To portray a state of chaos and of vulgarity in a medium that is itself subversive and jejune is to be no more than a scoop-reporter—perhaps the best that can be said for this work is that it is a competent piece of pseudo-poetic journalism.

A. C. BOYD

IMPORTANT NEW BOOKS

PRIVATE LETTERS OF**PRINCESS LIEVEN TO PRINCE METTERNICH, 1820-1826**

Edited by PETER QUENNELL these sparkling letters are of great historical importance, and give a fascinating and detailed picture of Regency England. Illus. 18s. net.

BAGHDAD SKETCHES

By FREYA STARK

Author of "The Valleys of the Assassins" and "The Southern Gates of Arabia." These vivid pen-pictures are written with great charm and humour, and perpetuate the atmosphere of the most romantic city in the world. Fully Illustrated 12s. 6d. net.

FANNY KEATS

By MARIE ADAMI

The life of the poet's sister. "Remarkable evidence of the human power of Keats' personality."—*The Times*. With 12 Illustrations. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS WAS GERMANY

Edited by CYRIL SPENCER FOX

Letters of Princess Marie Radziwill to General di Robilant 1908-1915. "Should find a wider public than most volumes of aristocratic memoirs and letters."—*Times Literary Supplement*. Illustrated. 15s. net.

EDWARD WILSON: NATURE LOVER By GEORGE SEAVER

Author of "Edward Wilson of the Antarctic." "One of the few who really earn the title of nature lover."—*Times Literary Supplement*. With 67 Coloured and other drawings. 10s. 6d. net.

MY FATHER'S HOUSE

By PIERREPONT NOYES (of the Oneida Community)

Mr. Harold Nicolson, at the end of a long review in *The Daily Telegraph* writes: "I have quoted enough to demonstrate the charm and interest of this book." Illustrated. 15s. net.

PERUVIAN PAGEANT

By BLAIR NILES

"Perfect. All of it convincing, all of it fascinating. It has personality, purposefulness and penetration. Her Journey in Time should be taken by everyone."—*Illustrated London News*. With 28 Illustrations. 16s. net.

THE LEGACY OF ASIA & Western Man By ALAN WATTS

"Ingenuous and full of interest"—*Times Literary Supplement*. 6s. net.

WARS OF IDEAS IN SPAIN

By JOSE CASTILLEJO

Philosophy, Politics, and Education. With an Introduction by Sir Michael Sadler. A concise historical study of the spiritual forces that dominate the Spanish temperament. 6s. net.

LÄLEEN AND OTHER STORIES

By MYRTLE JOHNSTON

author of "Hanging Johnny," etc.

"Her talent finds proper scope in this collection."—*The Observer*. "Vivid, pungent stories, which haunt the memory."—*Daily Telegraph*. 7s. 6d. net.

OTHER BOOKS: SELECTED LIST

The books in this list, in addition to those which have been reviewed in the preceding pages, have been chosen after careful scrutiny from a much larger number of current publications.

ART

FRENCH PAINTING AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By James Laver.
Batsford. 21s.

Mr. Laver's long essay deals, in his own phrase, with "the psychology of taste," and though one may sometimes wish that he had seen his way to being a little more precise and technical, along his own lines he is brilliant and suggestive in the extreme. Often disappointing and arbitrary in his treatment of the painters individually, he never fails to be fresh and stimulating in his views on the general function and tendencies of art. The volume owes much to the notes supplied by Mr. Michael Sevier and to an additional chapter by the late Alfred Flechtheim. Collaboration might have gone a little further: it is a pity that the 141 pictures, so well reproduced, are so perversely not those mentioned in Mr. Laver's text.

COLOUR AND FORM. By Adrian Stokes.
Faber. 6s.

The difference between the carving and the modelling technique in sculpture is important, and frequently carries with it a difference of aim and conception. But this difference arises from material limitations peculiar to sculpture. To see it in every art, as Mr. Stokes does, is mere distortion, and his division of painting into the plastic and the carving combines with his literary style to obscure the exposition of a subject whose scientific and technical aspects are already sufficiently complex, and to clothe with importance a programme for a renaissance of painting which is so simple that, naked, it would stand ashamed. Mr. Stokes is not original in hoping for such exquisite exploitation of the relations and interactions of colours on each other, on the eye, and on form, that the whole shall be organic and the effect immediate.

DRAMA

STAGE SETTING FOR AMATEURS AND PROFESSIONALS. By Richard Southern.
Faber. 12s. 6d.

Amateurs and professionals, in the theatre as elsewhere, are very different animals, and it is a cunning author who can persuade them to

drink at the same pool. But Mr. Southern's pool of information on the simple varieties of theatrical setting (excluding, that is to say, full stage scenery, sight lines, and scene painting, is so deep and clear, its approaches so skilfully planned, that it may well serve his twofold purpose, which is to clear the mind of the professional by discovering the outlines of a somewhat ill-defined technique and to suggest extensions and modifications of method suited to amateur or improvised stages.

EUROPEAN DRAMA. By N. Scarlyn Wilson,
M.A. University Extension Library. *Nicholson and Watson.* 4s. 6d.

In his brief survey of the development of European drama Mr. Wilson is handicapped by his reluctance to come to pointed conclusions. He spends too much time upon plots, too little upon dramatic methods; but if incorrigibly chatty he is steadily readable, and the young student may take note of many signposts which will be useful when he goes more deliberately over the ground covered in this breathless tour.

THE HOUSE IN THE QUIET GLEN and THE FAMILY PORTRAIT. By John Coulter. *Macmillan.* 8s. 6d.

The first of these plays—a richly comic picture of Ulster peasant life—has won five awards in festival competitions, proof that it acts as well as it reads. *The Family Portrait* has some of the same qualities—easy, vivid characterization, simplicity of movement, and a delightfully fresh sense of comedy, but its story of a young writer who earns fame in London by putting his back-street Belfast family on to the stage in all their unconscious absurdity has a slightly artificial ring.

THE PASSING DAY and THE JAILBIRD.
By George Shiels. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.

Both these plays have been seen at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, and they are very much alive on the printed page. *The Passing Day* is a vigorous study of avarice in a small shop-keeper who resourcefully conceals his testamentary intentions from his deplorable family till he has breathed his last. There is an almost Balzacian intensity in the portrait of John Fibbs, and one can't help liking the rogue.

The Jailbird is more conventional comedy, but it has a delightful broad humour and free sense of fun.

SECRETS OF THE CHINESE DRAMA.

By Cecilia S. L. Zung. *Harrop*. 21s.

Lady Precious Stream must have made many curious to know more about the Chinese drama, which in its frank desire to instruct and almost childlike reliance on the imagination, in setting, plot, and technique, is so frequently different from that given on the stage of Western countries. Here, presented with love and knowledge, is a detailed account of the conventions observed by Chinese dramatists and actors, together with neatly cut synopses of 50 popular Chinese plays and many illustrations. All very attractive to students of drama and to those who aspire to know something of everything.

FICTION

TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT. By Ernest Hemingway. *Cape*. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Hemingway's obsession about liquor—presumably an indirect result of Prohibition—has progressed a stage; he is now concerned not merely with the consumption but also with the transport of drink. Stripped of its flashes of pornography, this story of rum-running, gun-running, and man-running between Cuba and Florida would be suitable for boys; but boys, who have an instinctive sense of form, would resent the intrusion of a whole quite irrelevant chapter, and a number of irritating digressions, presumably inserted merely to bump out the book to marketable length.

COMING FROM THE FAIR. By Norah Hoult. *Heinemann*. 7s. 6d.

A sequel to *Holy Ireland*, this book continues the story of the O'Neill family from the death of Patrick O'Neill in 1903. Miss Hoult concentrates chiefly on the quick degeneration of his eldest son—he drinks himself to death and ruins his father's business—and the book has not the value of its predecessor as a broad survey of Dublin society. But Miss Hoult writes with taste and spirit, and the book has a number of admirable passages—the best of them an unforgettable description of a dangerous crossing on a crowded cattle-boat.

THE SAILOR'S HOLIDAY. By Eric Linklater. *Cape*. 7s. 6d.

This merry story is short but satisfying. It recounts the adventures of Henry Tippus,

sailor, from the day he was paid off the *Trojan* till he signed on the *Spartan*. During these three weeks many fantastic people and things crossed his wandering path. Mr. Linklater knows exactly how to make a character or scene instantly alive; and however unlikely the events, his characters are so true to type and his detail so shrewdly observed, that one cannot but read on. He only fails when he tries to melt into a serious or sentimental mood. But how pleasant to read such excellent English.

THE FIRST LOVER. By Kay Boyle. *Faber*. 7s. 6d.

This collection of stories by Miss Kay Boyle reveals the same qualities of sensitiveness and delicacy which have distinguished her earlier work. The cobweb fineness of her portraiture has its own dangers. Sometimes the emotions which she interprets are so ethereal as almost to dissolve into meaninglessness. But "Lydia and the Ringdoves" and "Kroy Wen" are exquisite examples of her evocative prose. Indeed, the latter, which describes with a subdued yet terrifying irony the impact of a half-mad film producer on a simple Italian woman whom he is determined to photograph in childbirth is quite flawless.

THE THIRD HOUR. By Geoffrey Household. *Chatto and Windus*. 8s. 6d.

A long first novel, briskly and gaily written, of adventure all over the world, and especially in Mexico. But although he does it so well, Mr. Household is not only out to entertain. The common denominator of all the characters is "nobility." From various nations and occupations they come together, detect this quality in each other and together found a society for the improvement of the world by non-political persuasion. With no indirect preaching and less food-snobbery Mr. Household would write a good novel.

EUROPA IN LIMBO. By Robert Briffault. *Hale*. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Briffault's pen has the power to make everything it touches garish and incredible. Here he carries on the narrative of his *Europa* through the War years in the same strain of lavish sensationalism, mingling war and women, rape and revolution, sex and sociology, and leaping from Belgium to England, England to France, France to Russia, with a fine skill which carries everything but conviction.

SALLY BOWLES. By Christopher Isherwood.

Hogarth Press. 3s. 6d.

In this long short story, written with a classic simplicity, Mr. Isherwood has done for a completely amoral woman what he did in *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* for a completely amoral man. The period is the same, that of Republican Germany in the early thirties; the scene, that same dissolute motiveless society. Sally Bowles, slack, promiscuous, friendly demimondaine, is exhibited in her relations with the various men she encounters and in particular in the disinterested friendship which springs up between her and the narrator. She is no good to anyone, yet Mr. Isherwood, with his instinct for humanity as a good-in-itself, has made her touching, likeable, a creature to haunt the mind.

THE ANTAGONISTS. By Paul Hervey Fox.

Michael Joseph. 7s. 6d.

A previous novel, *Sailor Town*, drew the attention of English reviewers to this American author. His new book has already received, in the United States, praise which will seem extravagant only to people who have not read it. Mr. Fox belongs to none of the familiar and rather standardized schools of transatlantic fiction; for, though he tells a dark story of human passions, he never tries to cow us, as some of his most admired contemporaries are wont to do. A fastidious, almost an aristocratic quality in his writing seems to come from other and more remote sources. His love of Nature, his absorbed observation of the human mind and body, the directness and restrained force with which his brutal story is narrated, suggest that he has studied and assimilated the work of Tourgeneff.

LIFE WITH MOTHER. By Clarence Day.

Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

A pendant to the successful *Life with Father*, this book was completed just before the author's death. It has the same qualities as its predecessor—observation of character, the queer, dogged humour of family jokes grown mellow by repetition, a prevailing attitude of steady but discerning affection. Clarence Day's humour does not strike a foreigner as peculiarly American; it has a peaceful, universal aspect. An unusually good dust-cover (anonymous) adorns his last work.

BEHOLD THE JUDGE. By John Brophy.

Collins. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Brophy reverses the conventional situation

and shows us a big murder trial from the point of view of a judge. He has personified justice and has arranged the scale almost too nicely. In his private life Judge Gaston realizes for himself the ideal of an English country gentleman. His first murder trial involves an unpleasant aspect of the modern commercial system and inside information complicates his attitude. A neatly contrived and abstract situation.

LONELY WHITE SAIL. By Valentine

Kataev. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

This delicately written and terse Russian story shows the abortive revolution of 1905 from an unusual and very effective angle. Even the necessary bourgeois question is cleverly circumvented. Two little boys, a teacher's son and a street urchin, become friends in common adventure, and we see the terrible events of the period through their accidental encounter with conspirators. The whispering of grown-ups, the air of suspicion, the placing of ikons in the windows on a night of pogrom—all this conveys vividly the atmosphere of the period.

LITTLE CHILDREN. By William Saroyan.

Faber. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Saroyan, with the directness and vitality that are among his greatest merits, writes very good stories of childhood. The first three of this collection, full of the laughter, sadness, and stubborn helpless courage of childhood, are among his best. But it is in these child-stories that his art is most conscious, and one misses in them the elation and poetic force that raise him above other writers in his comments on himself and the present world around him.

THE MAN WHO STARTED CLEAN. By

T. O. Beachcroft. *Boriswood.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Beachcroft, whose short stories have shown him to be a writer of vigour and psychological acuteness, has written a disappointing novel. Basing his plot on the medical case history of a man who lost his memory after an accident and "started clean," he has been content to record a curiosity of science without troubling to realize the characters whom it affects. Such fictional interest as the novel possesses arises from the assumption that the hero in his new personality would take a rational and humane view of the world instead of the conventional and heartless one of his previous existence.

SO GREAT A MAN. By David Pilgrim.
Macmillan. 8s. 6d.

A really good historical novel, covering ten months in the life of Napoleon, when he was resolved to suppress the Bourbon dynasty in Spain and "committed himself to a policy which, as Tallyrand foresaw, would ultimately destroy him." Mr. Pilgrim gives his reader the impression of living in the period and of seeing its affairs with the eyes of Napoleon's contemporaries, instead of with the cool and patronizing knowledge of posterity. The persons—all of whom really lived—are here once more alive. The thing is done with a care for history and a sense of character that win the reader's eager respect. A novel that keeps one absorbed and alert to the last.

WORLD'S END. By Pamela Hansford Johnson. *Chapman and Hall.* 7s. 6d.

To-day all roads lead to Spain; but though the shadow of war and of political unrest hangs over Miss Johnson's somewhat sordid little story of insecure lives in Chelsea, Brand as a crusader is not entirely convincing. But his domestic life is admirably portrayed: Brand the semi-educated clerk, nervy, depressed, seldom with settled work, is a recognizable product of our times, as is Doris, the overworked draper's assistant, whom he still loves after nine years of marriage. The minor characters are also drawn with veracity and an effortless economy.

FICTION (Detective)

THE ELEPHANT NEVER FORGETS. By Ethel Lina White. *Collins for the Crime Club.* 7s. 6d.

There are no elephants in this new study of the unusual and the ominous. Miss White's setting is Russia: her chief character an adventurous young Englishwoman whose rash enquiries into the workings of the Russian system bring her to the point of being suppressed with other victims of the OGPU. It is a ghastly, shrouded strip of Russia that she evokes, washed by an olive-coloured sea; a grey town in which the characters go to and fro apprehensively and stealthily, afraid of their own footfalls, for ever on guard. Miss White is supreme, in her own line, in her mastery of atmospheric tension. Her lurid picture of the People's Prosecutor, a drunken and maniacal female, is on a much lower scale.

Book of Songs

by

ARTHUR WALEY

Translated from the Chinese.

"As you read through this book, gradually you find yourself fascinated and content. . . . I have been bewitched by these poems. . . . To have made them accessible . . . is a *tour de force*, and only Mr. Waley, whom I take to be as distinguished a stylist as anyone now writing English, could have brought this distant and unfamiliar music to our ears."—*Raymond Mortimer* in the *New Statesman*. 10s. 6d. net. Textual Supplement 4s. 6d. net.

Lonely White Sail

by

VALENTINE KATAEV

"Kataev's new novel . . . has for its theme the stir and excitement of revolutionary feeling in the neighbourhood of Odessa after the Potemkin mutiny in 1905 . . . the story is done with humour and lively intelligence and gains in dramatic force through originality of treatment."—*Times Literary Supplement*. 7s. 6d. net.

The Young Men are Coming!

by

M. P. SHIEL

A new novel by the author of *Purple Cloud*, etc., of whom Hugh Walpole has said: "A flaming genius, Shiel is just about the best romantic writer we have alive in England to-day." 8s. 6d. net.

ALLEN AND UNWIN

FELO DE SE. By R. Austin Freeman. *Hodder and Stoughton*. 7s. 6d.

Dr. Thorndyke's amiable Boswell must be beginning to cause his learned leader a certain embarrassment. He grows more deliberate and discursive with each new case that comes along, and if one may speak with the affectionate candour of an early friend, more slow in the uptake. Mr. Robert Mortimer, the city bank cashier, who found the body in the church porch on his evening walk homewards, gives his version of the dusky event and the characters concerned with such observant intelligence and descriptive vigour that when poor Jervis takes up the thread he puts too great a strain on loyalty. If (one shamefacedly reflects) Thorndyke could take on Mortimer, and get a job for Jervis in the Ministry of Health . . . what jolly bodies they could find in the Mansion Block that has replaced the Clifford's Inn of their last adventure.

DEATH ON THE BOROUGH COUNCIL.

By Josephine Bell. *Longmans*. 7s. 6d.
Miss Josephine Bell has now done for the health services of a borough council what she did in her last book for a hospital. Her background—except where it concerns the Public Library with whose workings she seems unfamiliar—is accurately as well as amusingly described. The library attendants and Council employees who come under suspicion for the murder of an unpopular Councillor—the lover of the Chief Librarian's wife—have so much life and character that one can almost forgive Miss Bell for the fantastic silliness of the murderer's motive.

HISTORY & BIOGRAPHY

FANNY KEATS. By Marie Adami. *Murray*. 10s. 6d.

Fanny Keats only died in Spain in 1890. Madame Adami has painstakingly reconstructed the life of the poet's sister, basing it on family papers and reminiscences of a grand-daughter still living in Spain. Senor de Llanos had met Keats in Rome during his last illness and on a visit to London sought out Fanny. For the first few years of their marriage, Fanny and her husband lived next door to the Brawnes. Madame Adami has slightly romanticized her subject, but she paints a pleasant domestic picture of Senora Fanny Keats de Llanos as a retiring, sweet-natured but firm mistress of her household.

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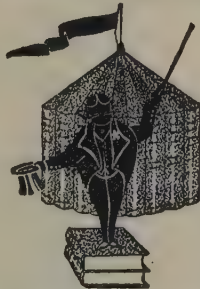
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THE POETRY OF THE INVISIBLE. By Syed Mehdi Imam, M.A. Preface by C. F. Andrews. *Allen and Unwin*. 8s. 6d.
Mr. Imam comes from a distinguished Indian family and took a Greats degree at Oxford. In this book he selects passages from English poetry which indicate, he believes, that the poets had perceptions of that invisible world of spiritual entities and mental planes which has been comprehensively described by Indian occultists and seers. Mr. Imam is widely read and his speculations are often ingenious; yet the artistic activity of a poet is surely quite different from the descriptive activity of a seer. And it is just in this difference, which his treatment tends to ignore, that the value of poetry and the reason for writing it are found.

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TOTEMICA. By J. G. Frazer. *Macmillan*. 25s.
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MOVIES FOR THE MILLIONS. By Gilbert Seldes. Preface by Charlie Chaplin. *Batsford*. 7s. 6d.

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A selection from Mr. Phillpotts's verses with a Dartmoor setting. As a poet he has many good qualities—a sense of phrase, real knowledge of the country, understanding of character, and humour. Sometimes the result is charming, as in his well-known lyric "Man's Days" (now somewhat revised, if memory is not at fault). He has a gift for epigram, too, which appears neatly among his epitaphs in a village churchyard. But his versification is uneven. There is an occasional flatness, or failure of rhythm, which often spoils a promising piece.

EQUINOX. By Robin Wilson. *Nelson*. 2s. 6d. In his new book Mr. Wilson wavers, hesitantly, between modern and traditional method. At times he writes in this way:

Now let the young man in delicate health
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and we all know that young man. But the basis of his verse is emotional and in lyrics of a studied eloquence he returns to an older music. He looks vainly for a romantic appropriateness and in *Flight into Egypt*, "the phalanxes of petrol-pumps" disturb his sense of fitness.

SOCIOLOGY

HUMAN AFFAIRS. Edited by R. B. Cattell, J. Cohen, R. M. W. Travers. *Macmillan*. 10s. 6d.

We need no anthropologist to tell us that modern civilization is a gigantic hypertrophy of material objects. "Attacks upon the problems of humanity" by fifteen accredited hands, edited by three professional psychologists whose average age is twenty-seven, and a *vaunt-courier* to a new periodical, "Human Affairs," these 356 pages have a conversazione tang. Only those by Havelock Ellis and Professor McDougall are well written as well as interesting. The fallacy of "the plain man" or "the greatest happiness for the greatest number" lurks in most of the others. The writer on Education (p. 152) confuses Wordsworth and Tennyson. Professor Malinowski pours vitriol on our love of football. Dr. Emanuel Miller's enumeration of the neuroses induced by a high-power society is entertaining; and Professor Mannheim's views on the technique of mass control laudably endeavours to evolve a communal individualism from the present chaos.

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way to Socialism. An operation is to be performed on the living organism; and the reader's difficulty is to believe that the parts not directly attacked will continue to function. The book deals fully with all the main controversies—money, saving and investment, the price level, etc.; but it suffers from the absence of a clear initial definition of the real wealth of society. Possibly for this reason the explanation of the service rendered by the capitalist in "waiting to consume" is hazy, if not fallacious. Mr. Jay is honest, and often illuminating; but he has failed to disassociate clearly capitalist from general economic principles in his mind, and of this the reader is uncomfortably conscious.

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FORTHCOMING BOOKS

THIS month's list of forthcoming books must be regarded as supplementary to the list given in the October number of *The London Mercury*. The books mentioned here are not by any means the majority of those expected during this very busy month, or the most important, but are those of which information was not forthcoming at the time of going to press last month, or those that were omitted for considerations of space.

Helen's Tower by Harold Nicolson, announced last month by Messrs. Constable for October, has been postponed till November. It is the first volume of a long autobiography, called, in imitation of Proust, "*In Search of the Past*." Each volume is to be written round some central character, this volume round Lord Dufferin.

The Crisis of Our Civilisation, by Hilaire Belloc, to be published on November 11th by Messrs. Cassell, is a history of modern civilization, in which the evils of Capitalism and Nationalism are shown to have arisen with the Reformation.

Dame Ethel Smyth's *Maurice Baring* is announced by Messrs. Heinemann for November 15th.

Ludwig II of Bavaria by F. Mayer-Ofer, is announced by Messrs. Cobden-Sanderson for November 8th.

Mr. Gordon Daviot, author of *Richard of Bordeaux*, has written the biography of *Claverhouse*, which will be published on November 4th by Messrs. Collins.

On November 18th Messrs. Secker and Warburg announce *The Japanese Gamble in China*, by Freda Uttley, *Germany, World-Empire or World-Revolution*, by G. Reimann, *Workers' Front*, by Fenner Brockway, and *The Case of Leon Trotsky*, the account of Trotsky's trial, is to appear on November 1st. It will be published by Messrs. Secker and Warburg.

Watch Czechoslovakia! by Richard Freund, will be published this month by Messrs. Nelson.

Invertebrate Spain, by José Ortega y Gasset, which will appear on November 2nd from Messrs. Allen and Unwin, was written before the revolution and is now translated for the first time into English.

The popular appeal of the philosophical idealism of Eddington and Jeans is examined in *Philosophy and the Physicists*, by Miss L. Susan Stebbing, which will be published this month by Messrs. Methuen.

The Sources of Knowledge, by Jacques Maritain, is expected from Messrs. Geoffrey Bles on November 15th.

A new volume in Messrs. Thornton Butterworth's Home University Library, which will appear in the middle of this month, will be *Humour and Humanity*, by Stephen Leacock.

A collection of Essays by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *As the Bee Sucks*, will be published this month by Messrs. Methuen, who will also bring out Mr. A. P. Herbert's *Sip! Swallow!*

Puritanism and Liberty, the Army debates from 1647-1649, from the Clarke MSS., with supplementary documents, have been edited by A. S. P. Woodhouse and will be published by Messrs. Dent.

A book of reminiscences, *Titles to Fame*, edited by D. Kilham Roberts, will be published on November 8th by Messrs. Nelson. In it ten famous novelists tell how they came to write their best-known novels.

On November 4th, Messrs. Cassell announce *An Irishman's England*, by J. S. Collis.

Pyrenean Festivals, a survey of Custom, Ritual, and Recreation in the Northern Spanish Provinces, by Miss Violet Alford is expected on November 14th from Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

The facsimile of Blake's *Illustrations to the Book of Job*, which will be published on November 9th by Messrs. Dent, will be followed later this autumn by a series of his wood-engravings illustrating Virgil's *First Eclogue* and Ambrose Philips's imitation of it. This is to be published by The Nonesuch Press.

Englishwomen's Clothing in the 19th Century, by Dr. C. W. Cunnington, will appear on November 11th from Messrs. Faber.

Messrs. Allen and Unwin announce for November 2nd *The Icons of Cyprus*, by Professor David Talbot Rice.

One or two additions should be made to last month's list of fiction. *The Rains Came*, by Louis Bromfield, will be published by Messrs. Cassell on November 18th, *The House will come Down*, by Betty Stucley, is announced by Messrs. Duckworth, and two detective novels, *The High Sheriff*, by Henry Wade, by Messrs. Constable on November 4th, and *Murder at Scotland Yard*, by George Dilnot, by Messrs. Geoffrey Bles on November 1st. *The Mystery of Sir William Stormbury*, by Eden Phillpotts, is announced by Messrs. Thornton Butterworth for the middle of the month.